

THE POINT

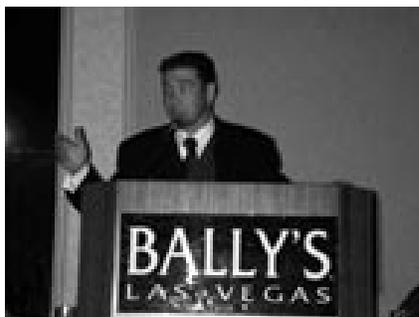
The Official Newsletter for The Association of Professional Piercers

APP 2001 Conference Held at Bally's

By Pat Mc Carthy

The Association of Professional Piercers conference was again held in Las Vegas, on April 9-12, 2001. This marked the 6th annual APP conference, and the event surpassed expectations both in the number of attendees, and quantity of vendors. For the past two years the Conference has consisted of not only the usual Workshops but also a Vendor Exposition. It was held in the heart of Las Vegas on the strip, at Bally's Hotel and Casino. For the past several years the conference has had to move to successively larger venues to hold the event.

To kick off the conference we held an Opening Party at GameWorks, a 47,000 square foot adult arcade. Body Circle Designs, Good Art, and Industrial Strength, LLC sponsored the event. Everyone in attendance was given a game card worth \$25.00 for games. In addition to the games, the APP had use of the upper floor that served food and had two bars. Most people socialized to catch up on the year's events with old friends that they see only at the conference. The event was supposed to last two and a half hours, but because



of the great turnout, GameWorks stayed open just for the APP event for an additional hour and a half. Thanks, GameWorks!

The Conference opened up on Monday morning at 10:00 a.m. with a very full schedule. Monday's events included the Member Meeting and Orientation, as well as classes on Legislation, First Aid, Equipment Management, and Grounding and Bedside Manner. This year the conference also included several Round Table discussions on a variety of Piercing related topics. During these discussions, all attendees were encouraged to participate by sharing their knowledge, opinions, and experiences. Monday's Round Table discussion was about Ethics including studio competition, intoxication, and minors.

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The Point

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The Point is a bi-monthly newsletter. It is the only newsletter dedicated to the piercing industry. We print 2000 copies of each issue, have a direct mailing list of over 750, which consist mainly of piercing, tattoo studios and health departments. The newsletters are also distributed to potential members or anyone who is interested. With the new 3-hole-punch format, it will continue to be a viable resource and should be part of your advertising budget. The POINT can also be viewed as PDF files on our website, increasing the visibility of your company. Nowhere else can you hit the specialized piercing market.

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APP Conference continued.....



Also on Monday while the workshops were being held the vendors set up the Exposition, which opened Tuesday afternoon. The beginning of the Expo was marked by The Extra Action Marching Band, a post-modern, humorous, performance art marching band that must be seen to be appreciated. They had costumes, choreographed dancers/flag girls, and music including brass and drums. There was a fantastic, fierce boxing match between two of the lovely ladies in the band. They were duking it out for-real and it was most titillating and entertaining!

The Expo was the largest yet, filling the entire Pacific Ballroom with over 40 manufacturers of body jewelry and related products and services. This year we had a coffee cart in the Expo, serving free of charge, complements of Rings & Things, Professional Program Insurance Brokerage, Industrial Strength, and Anatometal.

The Expo is clearly one of the highlights of the APP conference. There is absolutely no other place in which you can see that quantity of body jewelry manufacturers in one place, showing their wares. This is a MUST for everyone in the piercing industry. Wednesday also started off with workshops. The Members' Only workshop was truly a highlight.

Some of the European members showed video of alternative methods of piercing utilizing the tools available in Europe. Also, new freehand techniques were discussed by the members and shown on video. Other classes held on Wednesday were, Anatomy I, Inspecting a Studio, OSHA/Bloodborne Pathogens, and a Round Table discussion on Employee Management. The Inspecting a Studio workshop was geared toward the health

officials who attend the conference, showing them what to look for in hygiene in safety aspects of piercing studios.

The Annual Meeting and the Banquet Dinner were also held Wednesday. The Banquet has become another highlight of the conference. Thanks to Industrial Strength and Pleasurable Piercings for sponsoring the Banquet Dinner. After a great meal, APP President Pat McCarthy gave his speech. He outlined the goals for the next year and emphasized how the APP is working hard at advancing the piercing industry. The President's Award was presented to Sky Renfro this year for his help in producing the new APP Procedure Manual and for his years of support and involvement with the Body



Piercing profession.

Al D., who was a previous Board member and was very well known in the piercing field passed away last year. In his memory, the APP established a scholarship fund and this was announced at the Banquet Dinner. The Extra Action Marching Band also performed at the Banquet and entertained the riveted crowd with their humorous antics, driving beat and scantily clad boxing babes.

Thursday was the day of the last classes and placing of final orders with the vendors in the Expo before departure. The classes held on Thursday were Liability and Taxation, Anatomy II, Appropriate Studio Set-up, and Anthropology and Urban Legend. The Urban Legend class was unforgettable. Jim Ward spoke on the panel, and Fakir Musafar also participated in the class. These piercing luminaries collaborated on presenting the early history of modern body piercing in

the United States, which was very special.

The APP Conference and Vendor Exposition is not only the largest conference dedicated to the profession of body piercing, it is also a "coming home" to many of us. Being able to discuss what is taking place in your region, and what new is in the field regarding piercing is very valuable.

For those of you that have yet to attend the conference, you don't know what you are missing. The friends you will make and contacts throughout the industry are priceless.

The Conference next year will again be in Las Vegas; the dates are May 6-9, 2002 at the Tropicana Hotel and Casino.

If you are planning to attend please call the Tropicana and book your room as soon as possible. You will be able to access the information for the conference on the APP website at www.safepiercing.org.

Tropicana Hotel & Casino

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STERILIZATION INFORMATION COURTESY OF:

STERILIZATION MONITORING SERVICE

Let's face it - we live in a society where people can file a lawsuit over everything from hot coffee to medical malpractice. In order to protect not only the tattoo and body piercing professional but the client as well, many organizations have come forth to publicize their view of weekly monitoring of sterilizers as part of an accepted practice in the sterilization and disinfection routines in the studio.

To provide the tattoo and body piercing professional with documentation of testing and with the peace of mind of knowing that sterile products and instruments are being used on clients, many monitoring companies offer a service to test sterilizers using spore strips. In the following article, reprinted with permission from Dr. Joen Iannucci Haring, Director of the Sterilization Monitoring Service of The Ohio State University College of Dentistry (Columbus, Ohio), the importance of testing your sterilizer on a weekly basis is addressed. Hopefully, the following article will answer some of the common questions associated with spore testing.

-Karen K. Daw, Supervisor, Sterilization Monitoring Service

Objectives

Upon completion of reading this SMS article, the tattoo/body piercing professional will be able to:

Define and distinguish between sterilization and disinfection.

Describe the three equipment options for heat sterilization.

State the requirement for biological monitoring as mandated by the Ohio Department of Health.

Describe biological monitoring and a biological indicator (BI).

Describe how sterilization is confirmed using a biological indicator.

Describe a failed test and list potential causes for a failed test.

Define chemical monitoring and describe the difference between chemical monitoring and biological monitoring.

Discuss the benefit of using an outside testing agency.

Discuss the best way to choose a monitoring service.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN STERILIZATION AND DISINFECTION?

STERILIZATION is the destruction of all forms of microbial life. The limiting requirement is the inactivation of bacterial spores. Proof of such destruction is the ultimate criteria for sterilization because spores are the most heat-resistant microbial forms.

DISINFECTION is the inhibition or killing of pathogens. Spores are not killed during disinfection.

WHO IS REQUIRED TO TEST THEIR STERILIZERS

Per the Ohio Department of Health, all tattoo and body piercing businesses are mandated to test their sterilizer on a weekly basis. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Organization for Safety and Asepsis Procedures (OSAP) also recommend weekly testing.

(Editor's Note: The APP requires monthly spore test results from member piercers, but advocates testing more often.)

HOW ARE ITEMS STERILIZED?

HEAT is the most efficient and dependable physical mode of achieving sterilization. The heat may be moist or dry.

WHAT TYPES OF STERILIZERS CAN BE USED?

The three equipment options for heat sterilization include the AUTOCLAVE, the CHEMICAL VAPOR STERILIZER and the DRY HEAT OVEN. Regular maintenance of all types of sterilizers is highly recommended to prevent potentially costly repairs and unnecessary failures.

(Editor's note: The APP finds that a steam autoclave and/or statim are the most practical methods for piercers.)

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR STERILIZER IS WORKING?

Equipment must be monitored for proper functioning. An essential step in assessing quality control of instrument reprocessing is the monitoring of the sterilization system. This is done via the use of biological indicators (e.g., spore tests).

WHY MONITOR STERILIZATION EQUIPMENT?

In Ohio, the Ohio Department of Health mandates weekly spore testing of all sterilizers. The importance of weekly testing is so that you will be notified immediately if your sterilizer is failing to function properly.

WHAT IS BIOLOGICAL MONITORING?

Biological monitoring involves the processing of highly resistant bacterial spores in a sterilizer and then culturing the spores to determine if they have been killed. A biological indicator (BI) or spore strip contains the spores used in biological monitoring.

A spore strip is small piece of paper that contains one or more types of spores --- *Bacillus subtilis* spores are used for testing dry heat units and *Bacillus stearothermophilus* spores are used for testing steam or chemical vapor units. The spore strip is enclosed in a protective glassine paper envelope.

HOW IS STERILIZATION CONFIRMED?

After a spore strip is processed in a sterilizer, it is mailed to a monitoring service. In a laboratory setting, the spore strip is aseptically removed from its protective envelope and placed in a tube of culture media. It is then incubated for 7 days. For each of the 7 days, the tube of culture media is inspected for cloudiness.

If the spores are live and have not been killed, a cloudiness is noted in the culture media. If no cloudiness is noted in the culture media, then sterilization is confirmed.

WHAT CAUSES A TEST TO FAIL?

A number of conditions may cause a spore test to fail: overloading the sterilizer, inadequate temperature and/or pressure, inadequate time, or, improper packaging of instruments. In the majority of cases, operator error is responsible for the failure.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BIOLOGICAL MONITORING AND CHEMICAL MONITORING?

Often there is confusion between **BIOLOGICAL MONITORING** (spore testing) and **CHEMICAL MONITORING**.

CHEMICAL MONITORING uses heat sensitive chemicals (not spores) to assess the physical conditions during the sterilization process. Chemical monitoring involves the use of indicators that change color when exposed to certain temperatures. Examples include autoclave tape, special markings on bags and pouches, and, chemical indicator strips, tabs or packets.

If a chemical indicator changes color, has sterilization taken place?

No... a chemical indicator only assesses the physical conditions (e.g., temperature) present during the cycle. When a sterilizer reaches the required temperature, it causes the chemical indicator to change color; however, it does not indicate how long the temperature was maintained.

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WHY USE A MONITORING SERVICE?

The use of a monitoring service provides you with outside proof of testing via an independent testing entity.

A convenient approach to biological monitoring is to subscribe to a mail-in sterilization monitoring service available through dental schools, like the Sterilization Monitoring Service (SMS) of the Ohio State University College of Dentistry or through private companies.

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO CHOOSE A MONITORING SERVICE?

Ask questions about the **SERVICE**. What is the cost? Can orders be charged over the phone? Are there extra fees (shipping or credit card fees)? Is there a toll-free number? How often are reports issued (monthly vs. quarterly)?

Ask questions about the **BENEFITS**. How knowledgeable is the staff if there is a question? Is there a newsletter? Is there a doctor available for consultation? Are information resources available? How long are the test results kept by the service?

Ask questions about the **TESTING**. How many years of experience does the lab have in testing? What is the testing location (local vs. out-of-state)? Is there a control strip used to verify spore viability? Is a Gram stain used to confirm failures? Are phone calls made to inform the office of failures?

Look for a service with considerable advantages - competitive cost, more benefits, more reports (monthly vs. quarterly) and no extra fees,

STERILIZATION MONITORING SERVICE

The Sterilization Monitoring Service is located on the campus at The Ohio State University College of Dentistry in Postle Hall. Clients are welcome to schedule an appointment to stop by for more information on how your spore tests are processed. Additional information is available upon request. Please refer below for contact information.

THE STERILIZATION MONITORING SERVICE — HOW DOES IT SUPPORT THE COLLEGE ?

The Sterilization Monitoring Service (SMS) is not-for-profit and committed to serving the community and The Ohio State University College of Dentistry with proceeds benefitting continued education and research.

THE STERILIZATION MONITORING SERVICE — HOW DOES IT SUPPORT THE PROFESSIONAL ?

The Sterilization Monitoring service is dedicated to providing clients with the best possible service. SMS provides all clients with prompt and reliable service at a competitive price. There are no hidden fees and all information is kept confidential unless an information release form is signed by the client. The Sterilization Monitoring Service of The Ohio State University College of Dentistry is committed to informing clients of the latest information in regards to sterilization and disinfection procedures.

For more information, please contact:

The Sterilization Monitoring Service
The Ohio State University College of Dentistry
P.O. Box 182357
Columbus, OH 43218-2357
Local: 614-292-6737
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There is a link on the following website that gives a brief tour of the studio, not including the actual piercing rooms.

<http://members.aol.com/thirteenbc>

Classified ads are free!

If you would like to place a classified ad in the next issue of The Point, contact Elayne Angel at: phone: (504) 524-6147 or email: angel@ringsofdesire.com

SEMINAR REVIEW

April Williams

This is a new feature of the Point, dedicated to bringing you information about relevant educational offerings that are available to piercers. If your company offers seminars or continuing education related to the piercing industry please send us pertinent information including the dates that classes are offered.

The first seminar I attended was Bloodborne Pathogens Training and Basic Sterilization Techniques taught by David Vidra and Kris Lachance of Health Educators, Inc. The class was an 8-hour hands-on training course. The topics covered were: Requirements for meeting standards, Bloodborne Pathogens, Prevention, Universal Precautions, Immunizations, Exposure Control, Housekeeping, Labeling, Transmission, Exposure Determination, Post Exposure Reporting, and Requirements of an Exposure Control Plan. The last half of the class was dedicated to hands-on training in a studio atmosphere.

The students were required to identify objects and surfaces having different levels of contamination from clean to dirty in the piercing and sterilization rooms, and to perform proper wipe-down and set-up of the piercing room. Lastly, but very importantly, students were required to demonstrate proper handling of contaminated tools moving from

the piercing room to the autoclave, and back into storage for the next use. At the end of the demonstrations the students were required to pass a written test in order to receive the certificate of training.

I felt that the class was very well rounded and made full use of the eight-hour course time. The cost also included course books. The only drawback was class accessibility to students due to high travel costs. Health Educators will travel to your studio if necessary.

David Vidra is the founder of Health Educators and is one of the instructors. He is a former APP Board Member and his signature appears on the original APP Articles of Incorporation. He is a C.M.A. (Certified Medical Assistant) and L.P.N. (Licensed Practical Nurse). Mr. Vidra is a Certified OSHA Outreach Instructor for General Industry and is a Certified Trainer in First Aid and CPR for the American Heart Association.

Health Educators is a Corporate Member of the APP, and is also a Member of the National Safety Council and NEHA (National Environmental Health Association).

Contact information for Health Educators: (216) 623-0744

Coming next: a review of the PPIS Piercing Seminars!

APP Seeks Office Equipment

Attention all APP Supporters:

The APP is preparing to take the next step in professionalizing the organization and the industry by opening our own APP office!

To that end, we are seeking donations for office equipment of all types. If you are a manufacturer, piercer, piercee, medical or dental professional or any other supporter of the APP we are calling upon you. If you have spare computer equipment and software, printer, FAX machine, copier, telephone, adding machine, or any other office equipment that is not being used please consider donating it to the APP.

Remember the APP is a nonprofit organization and all donations are tax deductible as allowed by law. Receipts will be issued once equipment value is established. Please offer us items that are in working order, and not in need of repair.

We will have one full time employee to centralize the bulk of the work effort, record keeping, and data base for the organization. This step will ensure smoother functioning of all APP business operations. Sending of all APP brochures will be handled from this office, all calls answered, all spore test results will be sent there, and so on.

We are starting from scratch to open this office, so all offers are welcome. If you have a spare stapler, tape dispenser, filing cabinet or just about anything ordinarily found in an office, we're interested!

The office should be open in January of 2002.

Anyone with something to contribute should contact :

Pat McCarthy at (614) 297-9925



APP member, Duncan Van Luyt from Polymorph in Australia, with Carole and baby-to-be in San Francisco, California, with Alcatraz in background. It looks like she is aiming to be the most-travelled baby before birth.

Congratulations to Duncan and Carole

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How to Contact the APP

Requests for general information and spore tests should be sent to:
Association of Professional Piercers
PMB 286
545w6 Peachtree Industrial Blvd.
Chamblee, GA 30341

To contact the following members of the board:

Office of the President
Pat McCarthy c/o Piercology
872 N. High St.
Columbus, OH 43215

Office of the Secretary
Bethra Szumski c/o Virtue and Vice
2271 Cheshire Bridge Rd.
Atlanta, GA 30324

Outreach Coordinator
Elayne Angel c/o Rings of Desire
1128 Decatur St.
New Orleans, LA 70116

or visit The APP Website at:
www.safepiercing.org

Western History of Male Infibulation- Piercing of The Foreskin by Paul King

If enjoyed, this may be the first in a series of articles reviewing the history of piercing throughout the world.

This article will discuss the piercing of the prepuce (male foreskin). Other than the ear it is perhaps the world's earliest and best documented piercing. It is the author's opinion that acceptance of, and therefore information about piercing of the ear, including the lobe and cartilage, is widely available. As such, ear piercing will not be discussed in this article. Perhaps lesser-known ear piercings will be reviewed in subsequent articles.

This article will explore a subject that has been greatly ignored by all but a handful of scholars – Male Infibulation, Piercing of the Foreskin. Presented herein are some new thoughts and discoveries the reader is not likely to have encountered in any previous lectures hosted by the APP.

Male Infibulation involves pulling the foreskin of the penis over the glans, and piercing the foreskin through both sides, either vertically or horizontally. In theory, this type of foreskin piercing secures the prepuce like a hood over the glans, making arousal painful and erection impossible. The procedure was usually performed with needle followed by thread until healed. Sometimes the ring or fibula (safety pin) would be inserted directly afterwards or as part of the piercing process.

Ironically, in recent times the male foreskin piercing is usually performed to enhance aesthetics and pleasure. Most modern Piercers find that typical foreskin piercings heal more quickly and with fewer complications when using barbells instead of rings. Clear records on the subject are

found from 12th century BCE through the 4th century AD, then again from 17th century until the present. After the 4th century AD until the 18th AD century no Western reference has been found. The practice fell out of vogue for about 1300 years.

The book Onania published in London in the latter part of 1715 started the journey of masturbation into the dark ages. This is “Patient Zero” in all religious rhetoric on the evils of “self-pollution.” This pamphlet (and the doctoral essays of the following generations that quoted from it) set the misconception that masturbation was injurious and evil and had to be stopped by whatever means, including piercing. The author remains anonymous.

Note that the Arabs, Greeks and Romans were not prudes. They infibulated not for fear of sin, but superstition and control. They believed young singers' voices could be kept pure and unchanged, that athletes and gladiators performed better chaste, and of course slaves' sex members needed to be controlled for breeding, protection from STDs, and the safety of non-slave women.

It seems that the resurgence of infibulation was most widely practiced in Germany around the end of the 18th century. Doctors Campe and Vogel felt piercing the flesh of the foreskin and installing an iron ring, once healed, was appropriate for “difficult cases.” Keep in mind that these operations were performed non-consensually on children.

A few scientific heretics first appeared around 1875. They thought the evils of masturbation were exaggerated and that the medical operations were barbaric and ultimately ineffective. There were those whose rhetoric clung to the past such as Freud and the Catholic Church. However, the final nail was hammered in with the Kinsey Report of 1948, revealing that 92% of the population masturbated. This closed the door on recorded incidences of medical infibulation in the western world. It is known that piercing continued in the S/M (Sado-Masochistic) underground. However since S/M was until recently considered a mental illness and illegal, records remain elusive.

As a footnote, it would seem logical that the “Prince Albert” was first practiced as a form of infibulation on circumcised men. However, a clear cut example describing the practice or of the use of the name Prince Albert, has not been traced prior to The Art of Pierced Penises and Decorative Tattoos, by Doug Malloy. So far, American books on the history of circumcision (where the operation is widely practiced) have yielded no concrete references. Exploration of LGBT archives and the Leather Archives in Chicago, (a museum dedicated to the Leather and S/M communities) should be undertaken for possible references prior to the 1970's. The smoking gun is out there it just hasn't been found.

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Pyrex NRT's

It has been a while since a new piece of equipment has made much of a difference in any piercing procedures for me, but this is one that rocks!

Industrial Strength, LLC the "Sharp Ass Needle" makers who have attended the vendor fairs at the APP conferences were showing a new item at this last conference. I purchased several of their clear Pyrex Needle Receiving Tubes (NRTs). They come in both flat and angled ends, and in straight and bent tubes. What a great idea!

These handy tools allow you to clearly see your exit mark when you seat the tube into place for the piercing, and you can see where your needle is coming through on the exit side as you pierce. Very cool!

Also, any reference marks can be seen during the piercing. For example, when I do an "Industrial Project" I mark an edge line on the rim of the ear showing the trajectory of the piercing. Using a steel NRT obliterates my view of such reference marks. With the clear tube it is so much easier to see that everything is lined up accurately.

There is a disconcerting moment or two when first getting adjusted to using the clear tubes. As you pierce, you can see the needle "coming at you" in a way that you definitely do not with metal tubes. Initially, it seems that the needle is heading right for your receiving hand. But, of course, it is safely encased in the pyrex. There is an odd moment there,

though. You'll get used to it.

I did try some of the bent tubes, though I previously have always used straight ones, and now I know why! When I pierce into a straight tube I can make a nearly single motion of piercing and jewelry insertion. The problem with the bent tube is that when I pierced, my needle was longer than the straight portion of the tube on the receiving side. So, the bend stopped the forward motion of the needle. I swiftly turned the tube around and placed the longer side of the tube over the piercing needle to finish the piercing. The straight portion of that end was long enough to allow for a smooth jewelry transfer, and everything worked out okay. The bend did make placing the tube into position for a "daith" or "rook" easier, but I do think I'll stick to the straight ones, myself.

I haven't ventured to try one on a PA. The tubing seems like it might be a little sharp to place inside a urethra. But for ears they are awesome.

Be cautious handling them after use and during decontamination and sterilization procedures. Don't lob them into the "dirties bin" from far away or at a high rate of speed. The tubes are more than sturdy enough for piercing, but careless handling could put a chip in the thin Pyrex, or possibly break it.

If you haven't used one, and you do use NRTs in your practice, I would definitely suggest giving a Pyrex tube a try. I think they're great! The increased visibility is truly worthwhile.

ScarEase for Scar Minimizing

There are several over-the-counter products on the market designed to minimize scarring, and one of them is discussed below. Another will be covered in issue 20 of the POINT.

ScarEase is an FDA registered non-toxic, non-surgical medical device for the management of keloid and hypertrophic scars caused by surgeries, burns or trauma. This product is reported to generally reduce scarring and rejection caused by body piercing. ScarEase is said to help lessen the pain following branding, or scarification. It comes in two forms: ScarEase Sheets and ScarEase Gel.

They would like to invite members of the APP to see their web site and refer piercers in the industry to become distributors of their product. Thirty free product samples, product literature and clinical research studies are available upon request.

Find their web site at <http://www.scarease.com>

ScarEase is a Silicone Elastomer, considered safe and effective in the management of hypertrophic and keloid scars. Applied over a scar daily as directed, the manufacturers report that ScarEase softens, smoothes, and flattens scars and restores skin to that of the surrounding surface and skin color. Results may vary with scar density, age, size and from person to person.

ScarEase can be used on closed wounds (not bleeding or oozing) caused by surgical procedures, trauma and body piercings.

Recession-proofing Your Studio

For some while, we have been hearing that we are about to go into a recession or a huge economic slow down. What does that mean for the piercing industry? Well, like a lot of service oriented businesses, we are not recession proof and will feel the crunch when it happens. I agree with the experts, and in my opinion, a recession will come.

What should you do to help get through at least a slowdown, or an actual recession? Here are some suggestions I have to help you. We have a couple of positive aspects going for us and several things against us, too.

First, if you are thinking about hiring additional employees, take a good look at the situation, to be certain you have sufficient business to do so. Ask yourself this question: "If my business slows down 20% to 30% will I still need that employee?"

Talk to your existing employees. Are they able to work a little harder and are they willing to make a little extra money? Your employees will likely prefer working

a little harder to being laid off. Explain to existing employees the reasons you don't feel comfortable hiring new help. This should boost the staff's sense of security.

Second, spend wisely. If you are thinking about a major purchase, such as a Statim autoclave or a studio air filtering system, consider leasing or renting. This will help keep more cash in the bank to be used if needed, and extend your payments over time. It may also give you a tax break as you will not be charged property tax on an owned asset. The studios that have money saved are likely to come through this slowdown in much better shape.

Third, have a budget! I'm still stunned by the number of studios that don't have budgets. This is one of the easiest ways to monitor the financial health of your company. With a budget you can easily arrange your spending priorities and utilize your capital where it is most needed.

Last but not least, seek the advice of financial experts. Most of us know a lot about piercing but we are learning about running a business as we go. We will all make mistakes and most of use will recover from them. But, it is a lot harder to

recover from a bad business move if your profit margin is down, in conjunction with slow economic conditions. Don't be afraid to consult with your CPA, lawyer, or banker. And don't forget to consult other business owners. Let them be your sounding board and you in turn can be theirs.

One of the good things piercing studios have going for them is that most of our clients are younger and many are in college. They will not be as heavily hit by a recession as their parents. When it comes to looking the way they want to look, and being who they want to be, young people will find the money. Even if it goes against what Mom and Dad want. Body art is very compelling to many people. When it comes to vital decisions such as paying rent versus getting a body piercing, people aren't always practical with their choices. This is to our obvious advantage.

One last word of advice: lowering your prices is not the way to make it through hard times. You will still have the same expenses and overhead you had before, only you will have made it worse by lowering your income. Offer quality products and services, and charge a fair rate.

.....Male Infibulation continued

A General Time Line:

12th Century BCE- Per Mensius, Infibulation was in practice at least to the time of the siege of Troy. - Chastity Safeguards, by anonymous.

Up to 4th Century AD- Fragmented accounts given in the 2nd Century and after by Celsus and Orribasius, giving descriptions of the reasons and operation. -Male Infibulation, by Dingwall M.A.

17th Century- Surgeon, Dionis, describes the "bouclement de garcons" (the male ring), and piercing chastity, during Louis XIV, written beginning of 18th Century. (French) -Male Infibulation, by Dingwall M.A.

18th Century- Doctors such as Campe,

Jaeger and Vogel support infibulation as a means to stop masturbation. (German) -Male Infibulation, by Dingwall M.A.

1822- A detailed account of Dr. Marx's encounter with a patient who had been infibulated several times appears in the Gazette de Sante.

1876-1892 – Dr. Yellowees declared that he performed the operations by passing metal safety pins through the foreskin. (British) - Masturbation, The History of a Great Terror, by Jean Stengers and Anne Van Neck.

1910- "Self pollution- when everything else fails we have no hesitation in recommending surgical treatment. This is of various kinds, from repeated blistering to that ancient operation which Latin writers tell was practiced upon singers of the Roman stage, called infibulation." (American) Know

Thyself- Nature's Secrets Revealed, by Bishop Fallows and Dr. Truitt.

1926- (regarding prevention of masturbation)- "Other physicians perforate the foreskin and introduce a ring. (American) The Sexual Life of Our Time, by I. Bloch, M.D.

My usual disclaimer:
I am not an anthropologist. From time to time, there will be errors. Please be understanding and forthcoming if you have information you would like to share. Please address any response to the following address:

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Body Piercing in New Zealand by Shane & Jane

We would like to dedicate the article to the memory of AL D Sowers.

Body Piercing in (A O TEA ROA) New Zealand, is alive and thriving. Lesser body piercing operators are no different in New Zealand than they are in New York, Amsterdam and Australia. Responsible, well informed body piercers are also no different in New Zealand than those in other parts of the world.

Our culture in New Zealand certainly distinguishes us as a nation different from the rest of the world, and it is on this basis that we write from the perspective of piercing in our wonderful country. We too have piercers who desire to pierce only those under the age of 15, with no facility to operate safely let alone have any idea on what they are doing. These opportunistic businesses are spread throughout our country. Some are temporary, others mobile, and some well established in other forms of body modification. Whilst we would prefer to banish these creative operators into the wilderness the reality is they are there, and there to stay; not to mention the abundance of them just waiting in the wings to replace each other. If only there were an abundance of responsible, accountable piercers.

In being surrounded by lesser piercers happy to cut corners for a cheaper price, we decided to do something about this. We forged a plan based on our core values. We started at the beginning with what exactly are our core values, and what are we trying to communicate to our clients, peers and our suppliers, etc..

We concluded after much debate that our core values are that piercing is: Sexy, Cool, Enticing, Professional and Responsible. We interviewed our clients who told us what we showed them wasn't what they were seeing (what a difference). Images in our shop that we thought were cool were far too strong and were scaring many of our clients away. Our business name, logo, business cards, aftercare forms, client information forms and uniforms must all send a con-

sistent message to communicate our core values. Everything we say and do must be consistent, otherwise we undermine our professionalism.

Scary and extreme piercing images in our shop are gone, only to be replaced by larger than life, sexy, quality fashion images, showing the best of what piercing can be. (The Versace of piercing). After looking at other shops all over the world we noticed many operators thought it was all about them, and their extreme body modifications. (Not always user friendly to a first timer). A large part of your market may become scared and leave. That observation prompted us to come up with our strap line in our shop: "It's all about you." After all, body art is all about looking good, and then feeling good about yourself.

We are very grateful to learn a good sterilisation tracking system, thanks to "The Point" and the APP workshops. Good techniques, thanks to The Gauntlet training seminars, the APP workshops and the late AL D Sowers during his visit to New Zealand. To know and practice this on its own is not enough. You have to clearly show this consistently in everything you say and do, so that the client can easily distinguish the difference between a professional and a hack.

As part owner of a well established piercing store in Auckland, New Zealand and members of the APP our survival here in the body piercing industry is dependent upon our own existence as safe and responsible professional piercers. While there are benefits in belonging to Associations and coexisting as a unified group of professionals, (APP) there is no difference between what we do and any other reputable profession. What is unique to the piercing industry is what we do down here in New Zealand towards developing our future. Knowing our strengths and maximising those to their full potential goes a long way to securing our position and formalising us as market leaders in the body art industry. With it also comes responsibility towards our peers. We offer ourselves to other piercers in NZ to visit and spend

time with us. It is no secret what we do, the proof is in the implementation and then ongoing adjustments and improvements on those processes. Without doubt we do similar information sharing to what we do when we travel to the APP meetings. "You can lead a horse to the water but you can't make it drink." We are dedicated to nurturing and supporting our staff in our values and ensuring they have the ability to add to this; and providing an interesting, clean environment that prospective clients want to visit and feel safe within.

We are isolated in terms of being out of the mainstream of connecting with other professional piercers but this provides us with ample opportunity to explore, make our own jewellery, and solve issues through processes of elimination. Are we serious about what we do? You bet we are! We firmly believe setting consistent, achievable standards provides a platform for other piercing operators to emulate, and that can only be good for the future of safe responsible piercing in New Zealand.

Shane & Jane, New Zealand

Visit their studio

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Legislative Updates

San Francisco Legislation Update

Once again California Body Art regulations are under revision. This is due to the current availability of State funding. In San Francisco the local Environmental Health Department is writing their own regulations in addition to the statewide laws.

The head of the tattoo and body piercing department at Environmental Health Office called a meeting and invited all interested parties to discuss what professionals believe is necessary to ensure the safety of body art practitioners and clients. This was a first in my experience of working with regulators. Approximately 50 people attended, and it was a very open and productive meeting. It was fun to meet everyone!

Those in attendance created a task force by voting in 4 tattooists and 4 piercers from different studios to represent the body art community.

So far the process has been slow and we are awaiting the revised state regulations. Once we receive a copy, the task force will meet to represent our community and vote to further change the revised regulations, or to adopt the state's version.

It is a great system for involvement and a way to avoid having to entirely rewrite regulations when details can be decided during a few meetings prior to passing regulations.

It is important for all piercers to make a connection with their public health officials because they are our links to local and state legislators. Be sure to make contact and work to keep the lines of communication open.

April Williams-Warner

Army Body Piercing Policy

AR 670-1

"No attaching, affixing, or displaying objects, articles, jewelry or ornamentation to or through the skin while in uniform, in civilian clothes, while on duty, or in civilian clothes off duty on any military installation or other places under Army control. This change supersedes the current male earring policy. This message does not change the current policy regarding female wear of earrings. Female soldiers are authorized to wear earrings on Army installations while on duty in civilian attire and may also wear approved earrings while in uniform."

What the change means:

Female soldiers in uniform may continue to wear approved earrings.

Male soldiers are prohibited from wearing earrings and all other body piercings on installations, both on and off duty, in or out of uniform.

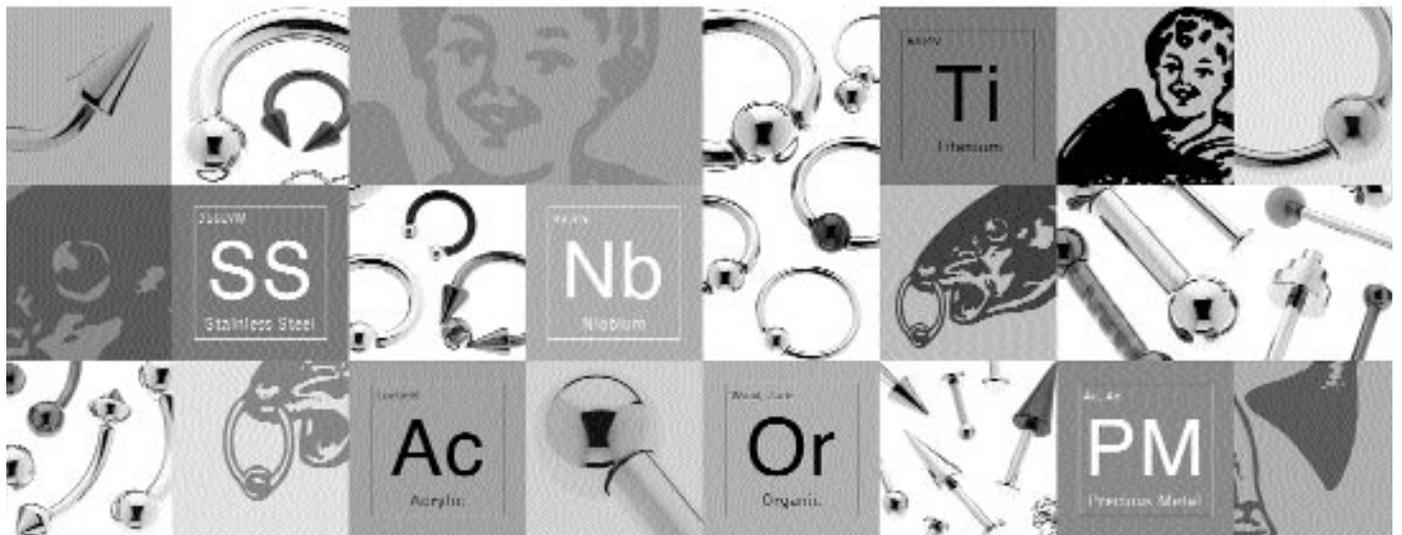
Female soldiers out of uniform and off duty may continue to wear pierced earrings on military installations; wearing other body piercings on post is prohibited.

U.S. Military

Information Courtesy of U.S. Army

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