

# THE POINT

The Official Newsletter for The Association of Professional Piercers

## The 2002 APP Conference and Vendor Expo

For those of you lucky enough to attend the 2002 APP conference in good old Las Vegas, you know what a great event it was! This year, the Conference and EXPO were held at the Tropicana resort and Casino May 5-9th. It was moved back a couple of months so the weather could warrant using the pool more often, and boy was it used! As with the past few years, the Conference and Expo continue to change and evolve. This year was no different – due to the size of the conference, an outside registration company was hired to take care of the increased number of attendees and vendors. Everyone was worried about what impact 9/11 would have on the piercing community. We were happily surprised that even though the tragedy affected our businesses in the later part of 2001, it had no affect on attendance at the conference. By all standards, this years conference was 1/3 larger then last years, with more attendees and more vendors exhibiting in the Expo than ever before.

There were many highlights this year. One of the best was the banquet and open meeting which took place on Wednesday night. With a huge increase from last year's 220 attendees, over 375 people attended. The Banquet was held in the main ballroom at the Tropicana. Pat McCarthy, the outgoing President of the Association started the festivities with the President's speech. He talked about what milestones the APP has accomplished in the last 3 years and where it was heading. Afterwards, Pat handed out the AL D. awards to both Steve Joyner and April Warner for their 3 years of service to the APP. Another highlight of the Banquet was the presentation of the President's award. This award goes out to an individual the president has chosen who has



Steve Joyner, Dave Vidra, Pat McCarthy, April Warner



New President & VP; Bethra Szumski and Jason King



The Board-old and new

gone above and beyond expected duties to help the piercing profession. This year's recipient was Dave Vidra. Dave has been involved with the APP almost from its inception. Upon receiving the award, Dave told how the APP and piercing profession changed his life, and he encouraged others to work with the APP board to keep the organization moving forward.

Eric the Lizard Man provided entertainment during dinner. He put on a great show, including sword swallowing, condom play, and escape artistry. Following Eric's performance, the Open Meeting was held. The first item of business was the introduction of the newly elected board, and their transition into office. The old board members passed the torch, uncovering hidden t-shirts stating, "I Survived My APP Term." At this point, the new Board members took over, giving a brief discussion of their goals for the next three years.

The Conference itself had many new and old standby classes for attendees to choose from: Legislation, Equipment Management and Documentation, Marketing and Customer Service, Aseptic Technique, Stretching, Jewelry Standards, Anatomy I and II, Studio Set-up, and Anthropology were only a few of the classes offered. As in past years, the Conference allowed all attendees to receive their First Aid, CPR, and Bloodborne Pathogens training and certification, as required by many states and by the APP for membership.

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### APP Board Members

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

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## ATTENTION Manufacturers and Businesses

**The Point** is a quarterly 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.

### Advertising Specifications

Type	Inches W x H	Diagram	1 issue	6 issues
inside front cover	7.25" x 9.75"		\$400.00	\$350.00
inside back cover	7.25" x 9.75"		\$400.00	\$350.00
full page	7.25" x 9.75"		\$350.00	\$325.00
half page-horizontal	7.25" x 4.75"		\$200.00	\$180.00
quarter page	3.25" x 4.75"		\$90.00	\$80.00
double quarter column-vertical	2.25" x 4.75"		\$50.00	\$45.00

Contact Bethra Szumski at (404) 315-6925 to place your advertisement in The Point. The Point is created on a Mac using QuarkXpress 5.0, and Photoshop 6.0. Acceptable formats for ads are black and white or grayscale jpeg, gif, eps, tiff, pict, pds or PDF files. If you are sending a digital file please include or embed the fonts. Email ads as attachments to beastworks@earthlink.net or mail them on cd or zip. Camera ready art at 600 dpi or better is acceptable if you don't have a digital file. Mail to: Beast c/o Rings of Desire 1128 Decatur St. New Orleans, LA 70116. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you want your media returned.

APP Conference continued...

The Conference also had other special features for APP members. There were members-only Piercing classes on Techniques and Genital Piercing. There was also a members-only Luncheon, allowing current and new APP members to meet.

The Expo was the largest ever, consisting 49 companies staffing 66 booths. It was held in the Tropicana Pavilion. Many manufacturers introduced new lines of jewelry and offered reduced pricing to attendees. The addition of the Expo to the Conference has made it the largest gathering of Piercers in the world. If you have never attended, keep an eye on the APP website (<http://www.safepiercing.org>) for information on the next conference. We look forward to seeing you all there next year!



The Tropicana Hotel



Pat McCarthy at the APP Booth



Jason King and Paul King with Jim Ward and Drew Ward



Vendor Expo



Dr. Jack's Anatomy Class



Dave Vidra  
President's Award Recipient



Luncheon

all photos ©2002 Barry Blanchard of Anatometal

## Tribalectic April 2002 Aftercare Poll

### What do you use for piercing aftercare?

(From an on-line poll; respondents were both piercers and piercees.)

Non-Iodized Sea Salt	31%	(628)
Anti-Bacterial Soap/Alcohol-Free Mouthwash	37%	(761)
Standard Bar Soap/Body Wash	3%	(75)
Neosporin/Bacitracin	7%	(144)
Bactine	10%	(217)
Rubbing Alcohol	4%	(98)
Homemade Aftercare Solution	2%	(41)
Aftercare, what's that?	2%	(58)

Total Selections: 2022

Many thanks to Tribalectic for their support, and for allowing us to reprint this survey for the POINT. See their web site at:

<http://www.tribalectic.com/Home.asp>

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# Meet The Board

## **Bethrah Szumski, President**

Armed with a great love for piercing, a Gauntlet course, a fairly brief visit with Angel, and a loan from my sister, I opened my piercing business in Atlanta, in November of 1995.

Having been inspired by the Orlando and Las Vegas conferences, I applied for APP membership. I was accepted for membership in August 1997. One year later I was appointed as Secretary, and I was later elected to the position.

During my involvement with the APP, I have had the good fortune to see a great deal of growth within the organization.

It was a great honor to be nominated and elected to the position of President. If the next three years are anything like the last, there are great things yet to come.

Virtue and Vice  
2271 Cheshire Bridge Road  
Atlanta, GA 30324  
(404) 315-6925  
president@safepiercing.org

## **Jason King, Vice President**

My name is Jason King and I am the newly elected Vice President. I began piercing in 1990 on a girl friend who decided she had to have her nipples pierced. Needless to say we ended up piercing each other in deplorable conditions with 16g 1/2 inch rings. One thing lead to another, and the next thing I know I was piercing my friends and their friends. I stopped piercing for a while so I could do a little research on the subject which resulted in the purchase of an autoclave among other things. But that initial experience started an idea that finally came to fruition five years later when I opened 23rd Street Body Piercing in May of '95. We quickly became Oklahoma City's premier piercing studio, and have remained so largely because we are simply better informed than our competitors. We were lucky enough to attend the very first open APP meeting at the Tropicana Hotel and have attended ever since. We are a fairly conservative shop, in which we perform only piercing and stretching (tattoos are illegal in Oklahoma).

The position of Vice President will

be changing a lot in the next few years. With the hiring of an office worker and a majority of tracking legislation being handled by (Outreach Coordinator) Megg Mass, the position has been freed up to focus on other things. One of the most likely challenges will be to help as a Conference coordinator. Now that Conference has become so large, the President (Bethra) and Secretary (Crystal) will need the help. Within the Conference setting, I would like to streamline the classwork by developing some of the courses for the future. For example, I would like to create a piercing relevant chemistry class and make an easy to use materials setup. An additional project (that most of the Board is excited about) that I want to help accomplish is to sow the seeds for additional associations outside of the U.S. If you have any suggestions about future Conference courses please contact me.

23rd Street Body Piercing  
411 NW 23rd Street  
Oklahoma City, OK 73103  
(405) 524-6824  
vp@safepiercing.org

## **Crystal Celeste Sims, Secretary**

Hello, my name is Crystal and I am the new Secretary for the Association of Professional Piercers. I am co-owner, manager, and part of a team of dedicated piercers at Evolution, Inc. Body Piercing Studio in Albuquerque, New Mexico. For those of you who don't know me, I would like to tell you a little bit about myself, and my plans for my term in this position.

I apprenticed under and worked for APP member (and former APP president) Kent Fazekas at Body Accents, Inc. in Indianapolis, IN from March 1994 to January 1996. I also attended the Gauntlet Piercer Training Seminars in March of 1995. I have attended workshops at the annual conference of the APP for the past five years, and served as a volunteer for the past three.

I opened Evolution with partner Shawn Taylor (formerly of "Hardware") in April of 1999 as Albuquerque's only studio dedicated solely to the art of body piercing. At Evolution, our mission is "to provide generously given

information, outstanding customer service, the highest quality products, safe and accurate procedures, and guidance through each client's individual experience. We will maintain a positive environment that is extremely clean and comfortable so that we can service the needs and desires of a diverse clientele and exceed expectations whenever possible." This is more than a statement to hang on the wall, but an ideal that we strive for every day.

I am very committed to promoting the advancement of safe, professional body piercing here in New Mexico. Our State does not yet have body art regulations, but we do have legislation within the City of Albuquerque, and I have worked closely with health inspectors offering assistance whenever possible. I have hosted local bloodborne pathogens training seminars for body art professionals presented by APP members Sky Renfro of Professional Piercing Information Systems, and the late Al D. Sowers of New Millennium Piercing Seminars. I recently traveled to Ohio to attend the "Bloodborne Pathogens" and "Principles of Infection Control" courses presented by APP member Dave Vidra and associate Wm. Bailey of Health Educators. I will soon be a representative of Health Educators and teach these courses in my area. I am very excited to have the opportunity to serve this organization. My primary job as secretary is keeping records and processing applications, so I plan to continue the work of my predecessor in streamlining these processes. Since I get to view videos from all over the world I have the opportunity to continuously get new ideas and pass on what I learn at our annual conference, in our quarterly newsletter, and in the letters that I write when I process applications. I am also working to help people understand the requirements of APP membership.

Evolution Body Piercing  
4517 Central Ave NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87108  
(505) 255-4567  
secretary@safepiercing.org

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### **Paul King, Treasurer**

I have been a Professional Body Piercer since 1991 and an enthusiast before that! Gauntlet trained and certified, I worked in all three former Gauntlet locations, Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco. I was store manager of LA and NYC. In 1996 Jim Ward, Founder of Gauntlet, awarded me with the honorary title of Master Piercer. I apprenticed many Piercers for Gauntlet as well as co-taught many Gauntlet Training seminars. I have lectured at Universities and the APP regarding the history of Body Piercing. I am an avid traveler, collector and layman anthropologist. Please visit my website at [www.ritualsoflife.com](http://www.ritualsoflife.com) to view photos of travels, tribal piercing and tattooing artifacts.

In 1999 I partnered with Grant Dempsey to create Cold Steel America, two tattooing and piercing shops in San Francisco. Along with me, the piercing shops and staff are current members of the APP. In the summer of 2002 Grant Dempsey and I will be launching Cold Steel USA, a Piercing and Tattooing wholesale company.

As Treasurer of the APP my 2 main goals are keeping the organization financially sound and showing the membership, in black and white, precisely how we spend our money.

Cold Steel America  
2377 Market Street  
San Francisco, CA 94114  
(415) 621-7233 or (415) 933-7233  
[treasurer@safepiercing.org](mailto:treasurer@safepiercing.org)

### **Megg Mass, Outreach Coordinator**

I will be taking over from Elayne as Outreach Coordinator. I came to the piercing industry in 1994 and began piercing full time in 1995. I began managing Philadelphia's Infinite Body Piercing when it opened in 1995, and I am currently co-owner. My interest in piercing centers on its potential use as a psychological healing ritual and access point to conscious body awareness. My primary focus in the industry has been community education, helping to raise the public's and healthcare professionals' awareness of hygienic piercing and

its meanings. I spend a lot of my time writing and speaking to various university, healthcare and community groups. Most recently I have been working with legislators to draft and pass appropriate and thorough legislation. I will be coordinating legislation concerns for the APP, so please contact me if you need help with regulations in your area.

1306 E. 54th St.  
Chicago, IL 60615  
(773) 752-5743  
[outreach@safepiercing.org](mailto:outreach@safepiercing.org)

### **Alicia Cardenas, International Liaison**

My name is Alicia Cardenas and I am co-owner of Twisted Sol. My partner Mike Nickels and I head up a team of dedicated and talented body artists in lovely Denver, CO. Twisted Sol was born from an idea five years ago that Mike and I shared. We wanted to create a shop that was the evolution of the tattoo and body piercing industry; a place in which people from all walks of life could feel comfortable getting work done in a creative, conducive, clean and sacred work space. We are a full service body modification studio, including custom tattooing, professional body piercing, scarification and branding. Our interests in body art carry us to all regions of the world in search of education of the traditional body art practices.

My love for traveling and other cultures and my love for piercing is what drove me to seek this position. I can hardly wait to introduce the American APP to the international piercing community. I think we have some really amazing things to offer and can help in world wide piercing consciousness. The International Coordinator position includes being a contact and point of reference for all international piercers. In the three years ahead, I hope to increase our international membership as well as pave the path for other countries that are interested in starting their own regional associations. I have a lot of ideas and energy to give to this position. Any feedback on what can be done to increase interaction with the international community is welcomed.

Twisted Sol  
1405 Ogden Street  
Denver, CO 80218  
(303) 832-1311  
[international@safepiercing.org](mailto:international@safepiercing.org)

### **Elayne Angel, Medical Coordinator**

My background is as former Vice President of Southern California Operations for Gauntlet. I moved to New Orleans and opened Rings of Desire in the French Quarter in 1993. I was re-elected to the Board, this time as Medical Coordinator. (On the previous term I served as the Outreach Coordinator). I am also the content Editor of The POINT (this newsletter).

In my new board position I am coordinating a panel of medical professionals in order to further our mission to disseminate vital health and safety information to piercers, piercees, medical professionals and the general public.

Medical professionals are welcome to provide input, ideas, and assistance and serve as a resource when questions arise requiring support from those with medical expertise and degrees.

Currently we have a Radiologic Technology Professor, several Registered Dental Hygienists, and several RN's and MD's, including a Dermatologist (among others) on our committee.

If anyone knows of knowledgeable, piercing-friendly medical professionals who are willing to participate (or if you are one), please have them contact me at:

Rings of Desire  
1128 Decatur Street  
New Orleans, LA 70116  
(504) 524-6147  
[medical@safepiercing.org](mailto:medical@safepiercing.org)

# TYGON - APPLICATIONS AND EFFICACY

By Noah Babcock of Evolution, Albuquerque, NM

Within recent years the product known as Tygon has been used more and more frequently by piercers for wear in piercings that were previously either not viable, or were excessively difficult to heal. I personally have been working fairly extensively with this material since late 1999, and in that time period have learned a great deal about it.

Tygon is a clear, hollow, flexible medical grade tubing that is manufactured in 14, 12, and 10 gauge sizes, which can be cut into desired lengths (depending on the piercing). Standard sizes of externally threaded (male) steel beads self-thread into to each end to create a barbell. In my experience Tygon does vary slightly in the dimensions of its inner wall (lumen); so 14 and 10 gauge Tygon tend to best hold a 1.2 mm thread size, while 12 gauge will typically do better with the 0.80 thread size. The flexibility of the material allows the jewelry to bend and move with the motion of the body, and contours to the shape of the piercing, hence avoiding tension of any sort.

As far as its biocompatibility is concerned, Tygon seems to do very well, as I have yet to see any side effects that appear to be allergic reactions of any kind. However the Tygon will stiffen and slowly break down over time, becoming more porous. Therefore, it is suggested that the Tygon be changed a minimum of every two months. In many cases, within eight to twelve months steel or other metal jewelry can replace the Tygon permanently, however the metal will often have to be altered slightly to match the curve that fits comfortably to the piercing. Brass-jaw pliers are preferable because they do the least amount of damage to the jewelry.

There are many claims as to the effectiveness of Tygon, however there is little hard data on exactly how well it actually works in different piercings. Also there is some question about whether piercings have the ability to heal with Tygon to the extent that later wearing a more permanent material (i.e. surgical steel, titanium, etc.) is possible.

Below is a statistical analysis of all piercings performed in the studio using Tygon between January 2000 and May 2002.

## **Navel Surface and related placements**

Healed: 45.45%  
Removed: 5.45%  
Unknown: 16.36%  
Pending: 32.72%

Out of a total of 55 clients

## **Nape and related placements**

Healed: 24%  
Removed: 8%  
Unknown: 28%  
Pending: 40%

Out of a total of 25 clients

## **Madison and related placements**

Healed: 43.47%  
Removed: 13.04%  
Unknown: 30.43%  
Pending: 13.04%

Out of a total of 23 clients

## **Forehead/Eyebrow and related placements**

Healed: 30.76%  
Removed: 15.38%  
Unknown: 23.07%  
Pending: 30.76%

Out of a total of 13 clients

## **Collarbone/Chest and related placements**

Healed: 46.15%  
Removed: 15.38%  
Unknown: 30.76%  
Pending: 7.69%

Out of a total of 13 clients

## **Wrist/Forearm**

Healed: 33.33%  
Removed: 33.33%  
Unknown: 22.22%  
Pending: 11.11%

Out of a total of 9 clients

## **Ribcage**

Healed: 60%  
Removed: 0%  
Unknown: 20%  
Pending: 20%

Out of a total of 5 clients

## **Pubic/Christina**

Healed: 33.33%  
Removed: 16.66%  
Unknown: 16.66%  
Pending: 33.33%

Out of a total of 6 clients

## **Back/Shoulder**

Healed: 33.33%  
Removed: 0%  
Unknown: 33.33%  
Pending: 33.33%

Out of a total of 3 clients

## **Vertical Chin**

One client pierced, healed

## **Overall Results**

Healed: 39.47%  
Removed: 10.52%  
Unknown: 23.02%  
Pending: 26.97%

Out of a total of 153 clients

Although the above results may not appear optimal there are a few factors that must be taken into consideration. First, the Unknown percentage is representative of people that were pierced, and never seen again. Perhaps they got their Tygon changed at another studio, or just never bothered to change it at all.

Second, the Pending percentage is representative of piercings that are still in the process of healing. Third is the fact that some people either wait longer than the suggested time frame, or don't bother to change their Tygon as suggested.

If those who changed their Tygon at appropriate times are the only subjects considered, the results change substantially, as seen below.

## **Navel surface and related placements**

Healed: 60%  
Pending: 40%  
Removed: 0%

Out of a total of 45 clients

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Throughout the last 3500 years, indigenous people have been getting pierced, tattooed, and scarred, as well as performing bloodletting ceremonies throughout all of North, Central, and South America. Through conquest and colonization some of these rituals have been lost, but thanks to oral history, ancient artifacts and manuscripts, certain traditions live on today.

Whether it is the Lakota people of the North America or the Yanomani of the Amazon Rain forest, piercing is a part of many cultures' physical, emotional, and spiritual identity and plays a part in the social status of the individual within the tribe. With the exception of the crucifixion of Christ, blood or life sacrifice events are not widely accepted. In my studies of North, Central, and South America and the indigenous people of these lands, it is clear why the people in today's world continue to carry on these practices in traditional and non-traditional ways. Piercing ceremonies are such a fundamental part of spirituality that every tribe I have studied had some type of symbolic offering in the form of blood sacrifice. Spirituality and piercing go hand and hand; you don't have one without the other.

"Giving the gift of blood was an act of piety used in all rituals from the birth of children to the burial of the dead, this act could be as simple as an offering of a few drops of blood or as extreme as the piercing of different body parts to generate large flows of blood" (A Forest of Kings).

Specifically the Aztec or Mexicah (Me- shee- Kah) the indigenous people of the valley of Mexico participated in many bloodletting rituals. These ceremonies required significant preparation and dedication. Spirituality was such a fundamental part of the Mexicah culture and bloodletting was such an elemental part of the spirituality that it was a common occurrence. Fasting, abstinence, and sweats were common preparations for most ceremonies. An individual offering blood must be purified in mind, body, and spirit before engaging in these rituals. Some ceremonies were very private and had few on-lookers. Other rituals were held on sacred altars at spiritual sites with accompanying dances and celebration. Men, women and children all participated in bloodletting ceremonies and had specific rituals depending on the nature of the event; ear piercing and stretching, cheek, lip, genital, tongue, nostril and septum piercing, blood lettings of the chest, knees, back, arms and face. The instruments used for piercing and bloodletting ceremonies include; maguey (point of) thorns, flint or obsidian, stingray spines, eagle claws, and sharpened jade, bone, and stone perforators.

The piercers were spiritual leaders, elders or specially selected individuals. The act of piercing one's self or auto-sacrifice was also very common. Auto-sacrifice was used to obtain different levels of spirituality within one's self. An example of this is a test that was performed by young soldiers before going into battle

for the first time. It was considered the first battle with the self and was performed by one's self. The young soldier would pierce his own chest with the maguey and cut out the piercings with an obsidian blade. This was not only a show of physical strength and courage, but also of spiritual strength.

The Spanish conquest and colonization changed these traditions forever. The people were forced to abandon their spiritual beliefs and rituals; Missionaries did not understand the significance of these ceremonies and condemned them as the devil's work. The people were labeled as bloodthirsty savages. Those caught performing such rituals would be killed and many died trying to keep these traditions alive. Today, we have the knowledge of these traditions because of oral history, ancient carvings, and pictorial manuscripts called the codices. Some people of this land still participate in bloodletting rituals today, although many rituals are being done in a non-traditional way, ancient ceremonies are not lost because of the fearless spiritual soldiers that give blood for their beliefs.

Recommended reading:  
The Blood of Kings: Dynasty and Ritual in Mayan Art. By Linda Schele and Mary Ellen  
Aztec Art. By Esther Pasztory  
The Codex Nuttall and Codex Borgia: Pictorial Manuscript of Ancient Mexico

This issue's historical article will be on the vertical or horizontal piercing of the glans of the penis.

In Sulawesi it was called Kambi or Kambiong; in the Philippines, Tugbuk. In southern Borneo it was called Kaleng and while the Kenyah called it Aja; the Kayan called it Uttang or Oettang. A few anthropologists made the Iban's name for it the most famous: Palang or Ampallang. An Indian scholar gives a description of it and calls it Apadravya.

First of all, a surprising fact is that what we have all called the Ampallang and the Apadravya piercings are, historically, one and the same. This article will cover origin, practices, and mythology regarding this extreme and very ancient piercing.

As to the exact origin of this piercing, nobody knows. Scholars have devoted their careers to dissecting trade patterns, particularly in South and Southeast Asia. The complexities of the influence of trade over time can most simply be described as the overlapping of cultures, like waves crossing from different directions. Based on the knowledge that all known occurrences of this custom are recorded on the same trade routes, and the intense nature of piercing and healing the glans of the penis, one can safely deduce that this piercing custom did not spontaneously originate in various locations, but was shared.

The only known reference of the Apadravya is the 6th century Kama Sutra. I know of no other mention or art depictions of the piercing in India. If the practice survived until substantial European contact, in the 17th century, then surely there would have been some recording. One can only speculate that this piercing was probably neither widespread nor lasting in the Indian culture.

According to Vatsyayana, the author of the Kama Sutra, apadravyas are any one of a number of devices that a man "puts on or around the lingam (penis) to supplement its length or its thickness, so as to fit into the yoni, (vagina)." The people of the Southern Countries think that true sexual pleasure cannot be obtained without perforating the lingam, and they therefore cause it to be pierced. "Now when a young man perforates his lingam he should pierce it with a sharp instrument, and then stand in water as long as blood continues to flow. At night he should engage in sexual intercourse, even with vigor, so as to clean the hole. After this he should continue to wash the hole with decoctions and increase the size by putting into it small pieces of cane... and thus gradually enlarging it."

There should be some debate on the definition of the term "Southern Countries" used in the Kama Sutra. It could mean Southern India or it could mean Southeast Asia. If it does refer to Southeast Asia, this would again demonstrate that the origin of the piercing is probably not in India.

The first known depiction is on a bronze dog from Southeast Asia, 4th century. The earliest record in European literature of the piercing on a man is from 1588. The explorer, Cavendish, is said to have been to the island of Capul, (Philippines), "Every man hath a nayle (nail) of Tynne (Tin) thrust quite through the head of his privie part (glans of his penis)...." <sup>2</sup>

Though the Indian Culture was extremely prolific, there is another good argument against Indian origins. Statuary predating Hindu influence in Bali, depict possible penile piercings. One anthropologist has cited the visual influence of certain indigenous rodents and the rhinoceros on the island of Borneo,

who naturally have barbed penises, as the origin of inspiration for the piercing.<sup>2</sup>

The only traditional practice of this piercing still known to exist is on Borneo. The Kayan people are believed to be the oldest practitioners of the Palang. All current tribes practicing the palang give credit to the Kayan. This is interesting since they are inland and considered by anthropologists to be the most isolated and oldest inhabitants. Current history dates the palang to other tribes only about 100 hundred years.<sup>3</sup>

Just as interesting as the mysterious origins are the variations of materials, practice, and mythology around this extreme piercing.

Other than the mention in the Kama Sutra, the oldest accounts of this piercing come from the Philippines. Popular in the Philippines, was a device called Sakra, (believed to be a derivative of the Indian Sanskrit word chakra – a center of force or energy). The apparatus could be a round wheel with projecting points, (like a spur held in place by the pin), stars, rings, fine twisted wire, pig bristles, bamboo shavings, seeds, horn, coral, agate, hornbill ivory, beads, broken glass, and in one case an object that looked like a snake head. Quills were used as nonfunctional retainers. The early explanations from the Codex say the woman insisted upon [the piercings] to discourage the men from sodomy. The Spanish quickly set about eradicating the behavior as "A custom invented by the devil..." <sup>4</sup>

1 [Male Infibulation](#) , by John Dingwall  
2 [Tom Harrison](#) is an anthropologist from the 1950's and 60's. He wrote several articles, a book and collected artifacts on the Palang, for the Sarawak Museum, Kuching, Malaysia. This author was able to go there and obtain photocopies of his work.

...continued on next page

Certainly the greatest volume of documentation for this piercing is from the Borneo. The Iban would sometimes tattoo a rosette or a fish-hook to show they had a palang. Palang in Iban means “cross or cross bar.” The pins would be made of gold or brass. Often a bushing, (sleeve insert to reduce friction) was in place and the pin could be removed as desired.<sup>5</sup> Sometimes up to 3 Palangs would be worn at a time.<sup>6</sup> The Iban also refer to the Ampallang as Burah Palang or Tanduh Duri, which translates as spout thorn, or point. The ends of the pin could be smooth or may be “little pins, coins discs, brushes, rings/rowels.”<sup>7</sup>

For the actual piercing procedure on Borneo and Sulawesi a splint is used to hold the penis. It varies in length from several inches to a foot, approximately a 1/2” thickness with a hole in both sides.<sup>8</sup> The slats are placed on either side of the penis and then tightly secured, flattening out the penis. After sufficient time has past for the lack of blood and cold water to decrease sensation, the penis is pierced.<sup>9</sup> Sometimes a Pigeon’s feather is used, anointed with oil, taken out and freshened each day. The piercing takes about one month to heal. The word Ampallang is the name given the DEVICE inserted into the piercing.<sup>10</sup>

There are many myths of origin for this piercing. The Kayan say a woman complained of a man’s penis size saying it was no better than a rolled leaf used to give her satisfaction. The insulted male ran off to the woods and pierced himself. The Kelabit say a visiting Kayan warrior used his piercing on a woman causing her death, but she was so satisfied the Kelabit continued the practice.<sup>11</sup> “The lady had various ways of indicating the size of the ampallang desired. She might hide in her husbands plate of rice a betel leaf rolled about a cigarette, or with the fingers of her right hand placed between her teeth she will give the measure of the one she aspires. The Dayak women

have a right to insist upon the ampallang and if the man does not consent they may seek separation. They say that the embrace without this contrivance is plain rice; with it is rice with salt.”<sup>12</sup>

In the mid 1970’s, Doug Malloy labeled the vertical piercing of the glans as “Apadravya” and horizontal, “Ampallang.” Doug passed this folklore onto Jim Ward, founder of Gauntlet and editor of Piercing Fans International, Quarterly.<sup>13</sup> For posterity it is important that the Piercing community knows the historical origins. However, continuing the practice of differentiating the same piercing as two, honors our own western traditions.

3 [Tom Harrison](#)

4 [The Penis Inserts of Southeast Asia](#), Donald E. Brown, James W. Edwards, and Ruth P. Moore

5 [The Sexual Relations of Mankind](#), (SRM) (per researcher Von Graffin), by Montegazza

6 [A Stroll through Borneo](#), by James Barclay

7 [Tom Harrison](#)

8 (Kayan- Ketip Utang widespread Borneo called Katiputan Iban called Selong; if left in place as a retainer, is called a semong)- Tom Harrison.

9 [SRM](#), states, they will sometimes leave the device on for 8 to 10 days. (?! An Iban personally told this author, “2-3 hours”.

10 [SRM](#)

11 [Tom Harrison](#)

12 [SRM](#)

13 per telephone conversation with Jim Ward, August 3, 2002.

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

**Paul King  
c/o Cold Steel USA  
610 22nd St #101  
San Francisco, CA 94107**

Tygon ...continued from page 8

**Nape and related placements**

Healed: 35.29%  
Pending: 58.82%  
Removed: 5.88%

Out of a total of 17 clients

**Madison and related placements**

Healed: 68.75%  
Pending: 18.75%  
Removed: 12.5%

Out of a total of 16 clients

**Forehead/Eyebrow and related placements**

Healed: 44.44%  
Pending: 44.44%  
Removed: 11.11%

Out of a total of 9 clients

**Collarbone/Chest and related placements**

Healed: 71.42%  
Pending: 14.28%  
Removed: 14.28%

Out of a total of 7 clients

**Wrist/Forearm**

Healed: 60%  
Pending: 0%  
Removed: 40%

Out of a total of 5 clients

**Ribcage**

Healed: 75%  
Pending: 25%  
Removed: 0%

Out of a total of 4 piercings

**Pubic/Christina**

Healed: 50%  
Pending: 50%  
Removed: 0%  
Out of a total of 4 piercings

**Back/Shoulder**

Healed: 50%  
Pending: 50%  
Removed: 0%

Out of a total of 2 piercings

**Vertical Chin**

One client pierced, healed

...continued on page 16

**To 'Vegas Or Not To 'Vegas**

One question I am often asked is: Why keep holding the annual Conference in Las Vegas?

There are a number of answers to that question.

During the 1997 Conference held at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino it was decided to keep Las Vegas as the host city for the APP for an indefinite period of time. Even so, other destination cities have been considered over the past few years. We have yet to find a locale with the convention amenities AND competitive pricing found in 'sin city.'

The coming year will mark the eighth annual APP Conference, the seventh to hold classes and the fourth with a Vendor Expo. The price for attending has only increased once, and special discounts for non-US attendees and members have been instituted. There has been a lot of effort to see that course quantity and quality has not remained static during that time. There is now an Expo for better product exposure, and there are as many as three courses running simultaneously. During Conference 2002, nineteen classes, four round table discussions and five special meetings were held. To compare, during the 1997 Conference there were only seven classes and one special

meeting. Needless to say we have become a fairly substantial Conference! Now, more than ever it is a challenge to keep attendance affordable. So, despite the general depravity that is 'Vegas, its pricing and amenities for hosting Conferences is beneficial to us as a group.

This President's corner marks my last duty as the outgoing APP President. In some ways, it seems that the last 3 years have flown by. I look back at what was accomplished by the board and I feel very proud. The past 3 years were not only a huge growing period for the APP, but also for me personally. The board set tremendous goals for the Association during that time, and I'm proud to say that we accomplished most of them. Some of our aims were standardizing aftercare, standardizing jewelry styles for new piercings, increasing membership, making the APP financially stable, making the APP more visible, and adding a Vendor Expo to the conference.

In the presidential position for an organization like the APP, you come to understand that you will have to make some decisions that will not be liked by everyone. So, you try to make decisions based on what you feel will BEST serve the APP and its members. I feel the board and myself accomplished just that.

You have now elected a new board to carry on. I hope every APP member will show them the latitude and confidence you showed every previous board member and myself. I thank you for electing me as the past APP President. It helped me grow as a person, and realize many things about myself both good and bad. Many people asked me

at the last conference if I would do it again knowing what I know now. My answer is definitely, "Yes!" Even though it was hard work, much got accomplished, and many things in life that have meaning are difficult. I urge all of you in the piercing profession to stand behind the new board, to support and assist them in any way that you can.

**Pat McCarthy  
Outgoing APP President**

## Studio Review ~ Body Rites of Austin



Body Rites of Austin is a body piercing studio located within River City Tattoo on East 6th Street in downtown Austin, Texas. Founded three years ago by APP member Chris Kane, the body piercing area is completely enclosed. They have set up a biohazard room where used instruments are presoaked and ultrasonically cleaned, and a separate clean room that houses the Pelton & Crane and Statim autoclaves and a stainless steel employee hand washing sink that is large enough to allow piercers to scrub all the way up to their elbows (without making a mess). In the piercing room, tools are stored in a special cabinet that uses ultra violet light to keep the airborne pathogen count low and to help maintain the sterility of items that have already been autoclaved.

For APP members who attended last year's conference, you may remember owner Chris Kane as the presenter who discussed Tygon usage in the "Piercing Techniques" workshop. He first became interested in

piercing in 1992, when he drew upon his training and experience as a medic in the Navy to perform piercings on his friends and on fellow Sailors. In 1993, he was able to start piercing professionally out of a tattoo studio in Austin, and he began to network with other piercers who encouraged him to do research and pursue knowledge of the industry. His explorations eventually led him to the APP, and he was able to use his research to contribute to Texas regulations regarding piercing and branding.

Chris has three employees, all of whom have been trained by him. Ricky has been piercing for 3 years, Rafael over 1 year, and Liz is his current apprentice with 8 months experience. Chris and his employees wear masks and sterile gloves when piercing because he believes in staying one step ahead of the standards. He is dedicated to carrying the highest quality jewelry, and to making each client's experience as painless and comfortable as possible.



**Body Rites of Austin**  
**500 B E. 6th St.**  
**Austin, TX 78701**

**(512) 472-4804**

# Patterson Dental Slams Oral Piercing

Below is a reprint of a glossy brochure (which bears an attractive photo of a woman with a pierced tongue, nostril and ear) that is being distributed by Patterson Dental Supply to dentists throughout the United States. The dentists are putting the brochures out into their waiting rooms. We thought that piercers, especially those who patronize this supply company would want to know what they have to say about oral piercings.

Coming in the next issue of the POINT will be a copy of the brochure that the APP will publish and distribute to provide a more well-rounded and accurate viewpoint for those interested in learning more about oral piercings and the potential risks.

This is reprinted by permission courtesy of Colwell, A Division of Patterson Dental Supply, Inc., 800-637-1140.

## Oral Health Oral Piercing

### About Oral Piercing

Oral piercing involving the tongue, lips or cheeks has become a popular practice.

Many side effects, ranging from discomfort to serious health hazards, can result from these procedures. Anyone thinking about oral piercing should consider whether the benefits outweigh the risks.

Oral piercing is usually done without anesthetic. In tongue piercing, a needle is used to insert a barbell-shaped piece of jewelry through the middle of the tongue. At first a temporary, oversized piece of jewelry is used to accommodate swelling. After several weeks, a barbell is inserted into the hole and a ball is screwed onto the stem. If no complications develop, healing takes four to six weeks. In lip or cheek piercing, a cork is held inside the mouth to support the tissue as it's pierced with a needle. The needle is then replaced with a stud or hoop. Healing time ranges from weeks to months.

### Risks of Oral Piercing

Serious infections, such as hepatitis B and HIV, can be transmitted during oral piercings if the instruments have not been properly sterilized. Other risks include:

### Pain and Bleeding

Because there are major blood vessels inside your tongue, piercing can cause prolonged bleeding. The many nerve endings in your tongue

and lips can cause severe pain in the pierced area.

### Infection

Infections are common in oral piercings because the mouth is full of bacteria and is difficult to sterilize. If your tongue swells as a result of piercing or because of an infection, it may become difficult to swallow or even breathe.

### Dental Problems

Jewelry in your mouth can chip or break your teeth and fillings and erode your gums. The chronic trauma to your teeth can damage the inner pulp, resulting in the need for root canals and crowns. Jewelry can also interfere with X-rays, making diagnosis of dental conditions difficult.

### Heart Problems

According to a study of 445 Mayo clinic patients with congenital heart disease nearly 1 of 4 developed an infection of the heart after body piercing had been done.

### Injury

If jewelry becomes loose, it can be swallowed, or inhaled into one of your lungs, possibly requiring surgery.

### Other Concerns

Oral piercings can cause increased salivary flow and lead to drooling. Eating, drinking and speech can all be impaired.

Permanent numbness in your tongue may develop

Food may taste different

Oral piercings form a place for food and plaque to gather, causing bad breath

Allergic reactions may occur if the jewelry is poor quality

### How to Care for Oral Piercings

The American Dental Association opposes the practice of oral piercing and considers it a public health hazard. If, despite the many negative side effects, you choose to pierce your tongue, lips or cheeks, you'll need to make significant hygiene and lifestyle changes to avoid infections and other complications. For the first two months, brush your tongue and irrigate the hole with antiseptic after eating, chewing gum or smoking. Then follow these guidelines:

°Brush your tongue and irrigate the hole with water daily

°Keep jewelry clean (be careful of regular jewelry cleaners, which can be toxic)

°Rinse daily with an antimicrobial or antibacterial mouthwash

°Make sure you know how to remove your jewelry for dental exams and X-rays

## Product Review ~ Dr. Piercings Aftercare Swabs

by Jen Plourde, Rings of Desire

This new product comes in a cute little purple plastic case that holds securely closed in purse, pocket, or gym bag. It is easy to use and a good stop-gap measure for cleaning piercings on the run, such as after the gym or on an over-nighter.

It is convenient and sanitary, if not particularly cost effective. At an average of \$7.00-\$10.00 retail for a pack of 36 swabs this won't get you too far even for the fastest healing areas. The product seemed a lot like Bactine. But the swabs are only mildly damp. Since they aren't very saturated with the liquid, it takes more than a single swab to feel like the piercing has been cleaned. This means a pack of 36 might last 10 days.

Also questionable is whether a "pain relieving anesthetic" is necessary or desirable for a healing piercing. I've never used one before on any of my many piercings, and don't feel I have suffered as a result. If anesthetic isn't necessary (and I don't feel that it is) I would rather not have that ingredient added to my aftercare product.

Dr. Piercings seems good to have around if Provon or Satin and water is unavailable or inconvenient, but I don't think I would use it as the sole care product on a new piercing. Especially if I had to pay \$7.00 or more per pack.

*Information below is from their web site at [www.drpiercing.com](http://www.drpiercing.com):*

Dr. Piercing's Aftercare is a revolutionary new product – delivering the most complete, effective, convenient piercing aftercare ever available. Working together, a group of doctors and pharmacists formulated Dr. Piercing's Aftercare exclusively for the care and cleaning of new piercings.

Exhaustive research was conducted to understand the latest developments in wound care and how to best apply these advancements to piercing care.

Dr. Piercing's Aftercare is the only product to offer the combined power of an antimicrobial cleanser, a protective antiseptic and a pain-relieving anesthetic, all in a saline-based solution.

The advanced technology of Dr. Piercing's swab applicator ensures sanitary, convenient treatment. It's easy to use anytime, anywhere and delivers consistent, safe and effective therapy every time.

Finally, a product that cleans, soothes and protects while promoting the natural healing process.

Made in U.S.A. FDA registered antiseptic and anesthetic  
™, © and U.S. Patent Protected

Simply the best piercing aftercare ever available:

- Developed exclusively for the care and cleaning of piercings
- Conveniently packaged using advanced technology for easy, sanitary application
- Helps prevent infection
- Promotes the natural healing process

Dr Piercing's Aftercare contains:

- Chloroxylenol – antimicrobial cleanser
- Benzalkonium Chloride – protective antiseptic
- Lidocaine Hydrochloride – pain relieving anesthetic

- Saline solution – promotes healing
  - Aloe Barbadensis (Aloe Vera) – anti-inflammatory; relieves pain and increases blood flow, promoting healing
  - Panthenol – Pro-Vitamin B5
  - Allantoin – skin protectant
- Dr. Piercing's Aftercare is available in a convenient, portable plastic case containing 36 medicated swabs.

How It Works:

1. Hold swab with the color-ring end up.
2. Bend the color-ring tip until it "snaps".
3. Liquid flows down into the white tip.
4. Apply medicated tip to piercing. Dispose.

**WARNINGS:** For external use only. Keep out of reach of children. If redness, irritation, infection or swelling occurs, discontinue use and consult a physician. Keep out of eyes. Do not insert in ear canal. Store at room temperature.

**Single Orders for Personal Use:** Individual packs (36 swabs) of Dr. Piercing's Aftercare are available for \$7.00 + \$2.00 shipping. Please call toll-free 1-866-476-2348 to order today.

**Wholesale Orders for Retailers:** If you are a professional piercer and wish to purchase Dr. Piercing's Aftercare please use our online order form or call us at 1-866-476-2348. Wholesale orders are shipped in cases of 36 individual packs (three counter displays with 12 individual packs each). Cost is \$120.00 per case of 36 packs.

## Classified Ads

The Psychedelic Shack in Pensacola, FL is hiring tattoo artists and APP piercers. Medical, vacation, guaranteed salary. Drug-free ONLY. 800-804-8188.

Experienced piercer needed 3 to 4 days a week for high volume tattoo shop in Fayetteville, NC. Materials supplied. Portfolio and References required. Please contact Jen at 910.261.4931

Awesome Opportunity for Experienced Piercer!  
New Piercing Studio Open in Lilburn, GA.  
Looking for someone who likes the challenge of helping to mold a new studio! Great Pay & positive environment! Must possess positive attitude, team player, self starter, with Good Customer Service Skills! (Prefer someone who can fulfill APP Standards)  
Please call 678-478-7998 for more info.  
Email: limelitecorp@aol.com

**COLD STEEL AMERICA** is hiring! Cold Steel America is a fun and professional piercing and tattoo studio, with two locations in San Francisco, CA.

We are looking to hire a fully trained Body Piercer with a minimum of 3 years piercing experience in a studio. Please send a VHS video recording of yourself performing at least 2 piercings, starting from set up through clean up, including full aftercare, along with resume, portfolio and references. For the right person there is definite opportunity for advancement. Full time or part time / flexible hour positions are available. Sorry we are not hiring apprentices at this time.  
Applicants must have an open and friendly demeanor with a desire to live in San Francisco. Individuals need to be professional, punctual, self-sufficient, responsible, comfortable with diverse communities and have great interpersonal communication.  
Applicants need to have the means and maturity to relocate to San Francisco. Please address questions to Tam Sherman at (415) 621-7233. If she is not in, please tell the Counterperson that the call is regarding possible employment. Mail resumes, references, portfolios and video to:  
Cold Steel America  
Attn: Tam  
2377 Market Street  
San Francisco, CA 94114

Tygon ...continued from page 11

**Overall Results**

Healed: 57.27%  
Pending: 36.36%  
Removed: 6.36%

Out of a total of 110 clients

Based on the above results it becomes clear that changing the Tygon on a regular basis for the duration of the healing process is essential. One way we have emphasized this at the studio is by requiring that the clients pay for the first three (generally all that is needed) changes prior to being pierced. This helps to motivate the client to not only visit for a Tygon change, but to come in on time, as well.

Based on overall positive results, I feel that Tygon is a material that can be used quite successfully for piercings that were previously not very easily or commonly healed. However, to date, the client base for the research has been limited. It would be optimal for us to each compile our own data to be shared so that we can gain a better grasp of just what possibilities exist for the use of this unique, inert, flexible material.

### We Need You!

The APP needs your help to support our mission of disseminating of vital health, safety and education information to piercers, piercees, medical professionals and the general public.  
Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law because we are a Non-profit corporation.

<p>YOU choose where your dollars will be spent:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> AL D Scholarship Fund</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Legislation Outreach</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Educational Outreach</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Wherever it is most needed</p> <p>YOU choose your Donation Level:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bamboo: \$20.00</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Steel: \$50.00</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Gold: \$100.00</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Platinum: \$250.00</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other \$ _____</p>	<p>Bamboo Level receives an APP bumper sticker</p> <p>Steel Level and up receive a full length video of the APP's 2001 Anthropology course featuring Jim Ward. This is NOT available for purchase anywhere, at any price!</p> <p>Your name as you would like it to appear in the POINT as an APP supporter: _____</p> <p>My check payable for \$ _____ to The Association of Professional Piercers is enclosed</p>	<p>Please charge my Visa or MasterCard:</p> <p>Card Number _____ - _____ - _____ - _____</p> <p>Expiration _____ / _____</p> <p>Signature _____</p> <p>Send this form to:</p> <p>APP PMB #286 5456 Peachtree Industrial Blvd. Chamblee, GA 30341</p> <p>We appreciate all contributions and thank you for your support!</p>
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# Body Jewelry:

It's not hard science,  
it's just good art.



At Good Art, we pride ourselves on the same high standards that have been driving force of the company since its inception: Superior quality and outstanding selection, priced reasonably and delivered on time. More than a decade later, we continue in the relentless pursuit of manufacturing perfection in every piece, every time. Because while you can always find cheaper, you'll never find better. Quality. Service. Selection. Good Art. Fine Body Jewelry Since 1990.

**good art** body jewelry



Wholesale, Retail, Mail Order, 1420 4th Street | Santa Monica CA 90401 | 800 GOOD ART | International 310 395 4063 | Fax 310 393 5818 | [www.goodart.com](http://www.goodart.com)

**Association of Professional Piercers**  
**The Point**  
PMB 286  
5456 Peachtree Industrial Blvd.  
Chamblee, GA 30341

