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Pierced ears becoming more popular

Earrings on men show individuality

By Jessica Brown
Reporter

Rebellion, fashion, peer pressure, individuality — which concept conveys the popular wearing of earrings by men?

Laura Lambert, manager of Claire's Boutiques, an earring store in Post Oak Mall, says "Some guys get their ear pierced for a gag or for a bet; however, rebellion probably is the main reason for piercing."

But Clint Bills, a freshman animal science major, says rebellion has nothing to do with men wearing earrings.

"If I really wanted to rebel, I would color my hair green," Bills says. "The pierced ear is more of a fashion statement, as well as an individual statement."

Brian Bowers, a freshman business analysis major, thinks the earring denotes individuality.

He adds that it's a form of expression not only because of fashion, but also because it attracts women.

"The pierced ear shows flamboyance," Bowers says. "It shows you can have fun."

"Gold and silver loops attract girls the most."

Dr. John Thomas, assistant professor of rural sociology, addresses the concept of the "looking-glass self" — the self-concept all individuals form by the reactions of others to their behavior.

"If there is any harm with the ear-

piercing," he says, "it is to themselves by the interpretation of others."

Peer pressure, a seemingly simple answer to ear-piercing, apparently has varying degrees of relevance for men.

"There was no peer pressure involved for me," Bills says. "I did it because I wanted to do something different, and because I was tired of pleasing everybody else."

But Mike Banson, a sophomore mechanical engineering major, believes otherwise.

"All my friends got their ears pierced, so I did it," Banson says. "Peer pressure is involved."

Debbie Wilson, assistant manager of Claire's Boutiques, has noticed peer pressure is not solely between men.

"Girlfriends come in with the men and sometimes pressure them into having it done," Wilson says.

Guilt by association, the basis for much dislike toward men sporting earrings, used to be a problem for men, Banson says, but it's more accepted now because it's not associated with rock 'n' roll, drugs and groupies as much anymore.

And the acceptance of "earring-ed" male ears isn't limited to the young.

Linda York, manager of the Piercing Pagoda in Post Oak Mall, says, "I've had 30- to 60-year-old men in here getting their ears pierced."



Photo Illustration by Doug...

Two 50-year-old UT students return to college dorm life

AUSTIN (AP) — The thousands of faces of Jester dormitory residents at the University of Texas tend to blend together into one youthful image.

Bob Ferry and Tom Warren are the exceptions.

Ferry, 56, and Warren, 57, may be the oldest students living in the dormitory, but to them, age is irrelevant when it comes to pursuing a higher education.

"I don't look upon age as an unusual thing," Ferry says. "I think there are a whole lot of older people out there — what are we going to do with them — retire them and put them in a wheel chair? Shucks, I'm just starting."

Warren called returning to college "an opportunity of a lifetime — to explore intellectually."

"I'm not ever going to retire. I'm having a ball," says Warren, a grandfather.

Although Ferry's and Warren's career backgrounds are different, they have both ended up in the College of Education.

Ferry, a doctoral student in science education, is a former commercial airline pilot and a retired major in the Air Force.

But for the past three years, Ferry

has been doing what he loves most — teaching.

He taught science to high school students in South Texas from 1983 to 1986 and hopes eventually to teach at a small college.

"If something happens to the biological clock where I can only tick

"I think there are a whole lot of older people out there — what are we going to do with them — retire them and put them in a wheel chair? Shucks, I'm just starting."

— Tom Warren, 57-year-old college student

for another 20 years — that's 20 productive years," Ferry says. "How much influence can I have on the next generation in 20 years?"

As a teaching assistant in biology, Ferry has a reputation as an industrious worker when it comes to helping students.

Bethany Fitch, an education sophomore who was in Ferry's biology

class last semester, says Ferry is as devoted to his students as he is to education.

"He is very dedicated," Fitch says. "He had classes to attend as well, but he would spend time with students when he needed to be studying."

When he does study, Ferry goes to his College of Education Building office, which is packed with dozens of relics, including a mastodon tusk and a 1896 Mother Goose book.

Ferry and Warren chose to live in Jester for practical purposes.

"It would have cost at least as much to live here as it does to live in an apartment," Warren says. "Here I don't have to hassle with making my own meals, and everything I need is in walking distance."

Warren graduated from the UT School of law in 1955 and practiced civil law for 24 years. After experiencing job exhaustion as a lawyer, Warren traveled for two years and landed a position in the Dallas Morning News classified advertising department.

"It was a gradual decision to come back to school," Warren says. "I had entertained the idea for sometime while working at the Dallas Morning News when a fellow employee said I'd make a great teacher."

Mattox says GTE inflated phone taxes

AUSTIN (AP) — General Telephone Company of Southwest is overcharging customers by taxing them at higher rates than the utility pays, state attorney General Jim Mattox said Wednesday.

Mattox has filed a motion with the Public Utility Commission and a state district court to force a move by the telephone company to withdraw a 5-year rate case pending before PUC.

Mattox claims GTE has changed in federal tax law the case was filed, has continued to charge its rate payers the highest tax rates.

"Since 1985, General Telephone has received a \$15 million windfall from these tax savings," he said. "We believe the state of Texas and its taxpayers have been overcharged by \$127 million."

Mattox, representing the Purchasing and General Services Commission, said he wants court and PUC to find out if the utility's savings have not been passed along to customers.

General Telephone lost the PUC in 1986.

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