

# Body art increases health risks

LUBBOCK (AP) — With tattoos, bellybutton rings and nipple rings becoming increasingly popular among young professionals, researchers say there is more at risk than odd stares at the company picnic.

Myrna Armstrong, an expert in the field of body art and a nurse at Texas Tech Health Sciences Center, says the boom could also mean a resurgence of diseases like Hepatitis B among middle class young people.

"As it becomes more and more accepted for people to get body piercing and body art, it is possible that diseases associated with those things will increase," Armstrong said. "Whenever you have bleeding at a place, and an infection on the part of the worker or the patient, you have the potential for transmission."

The number of people getting tattoos nationwide has nearly quadrupled since 1980 and nearly two-thirds of the customers are in their mid-20s, according to a study by Armstrong in 1998.

The change in demographics has sparked renewed interest by health professionals — especially those who cater to the wealthy. This year, Armstrong has been asked to speak at seminars across the country by doctors seeking advice on the dangers of tattoos.

"When it was just the lower-economic class that was getting tattooed, many people in the medical com-

munity didn't pay much attention," Armstrong said. "But now the picture is completely different. It's become more acceptable."

She says the explosion sprang from people's desire to look different.

"It seems mainly to be associated with a growing need to feel special or be unique ... to set yourself apart from the rest," Armstrong said.

But the change in attitude toward tattoos and body piercing is not just obvious in studies. Many tattoo parlor workers say young professionals walk into their shops in suits and dresses.

"Yep. Just the other day I gave a guy a tattoo over lunch," said Jacob Taylor, a 24-year-old artist at Taylor's Tattoo. "I can't say where he worked, but he was in a suit and tie and owned a company. We get that all the time these days."

Taylor says the most popular request is the bellybutton ring, closely followed by the butterfly tattoo — both for women.

Armstrong said Taylor's anecdotes fit with her experiences.

"We're talking about confident, career-oriented women that are capable decision makers," Armstrong said. "We just need to increase education so that the good decision-making includes making sure to investigate the tattoo parlor before you lie down on the table."

**"It seems mainly to be associated with a growing need to feel special or be unique."**

— Myrna Armstrong  
Body art expert

News in Brief

## Program to look at smoothies' benefits

The Health Education Department of A.P. Beutel Health Center is presenting a free nutrition program, "Smoothies and Supplements: The Real Scoop," at the Recreational Sports Center in Room 281 on Wednesday at 5:30 p.m.

The program will cover topics such as whether smoothies are meal replacements or snacks and what the effects of adding common supplements to smoothies are.

Department officials said herbs and supplements are not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration, so those that are new to the market may have unknown adverse effects on a user's health.

The program will compare the claims advertisers make regarding the benefits of taking certain supplements, such as ginseng and lecithin, as opposed to the actual effects they actually have on the individual.

Participants may also learn recipes for making their own smoothies.

Free Zuka Juice smoothies will be given to the first 25 people to arrive, and other door prizes will be given away as well.

# MSC to present professor series

BY STUART HUTSON  
The Battalion

In Spring 2000 the MSC's Student Programs Office will unveil the Professor Series, a program designed to allow students the opportunity to converse with professors who are specialists in topics of current interest.

Nathan Cray, a senior mechanical engineering major and executive vice president for MSC programming, said although the program is still in its planning stage, it will likely involve three preliminary meetings between a professor and a few students who will serve on the Professor Series committee.

The committee will create a running dialogue of ideas and views with the professor, and the results of the dialogue will be presented in an open forum to the student body.

Cray said the program will most likely start with only one or two professors directing discussions over topics chosen by the Professor Series committee.

Cray said the program will afford students the opportunity to

briefly step away from the and discuss a subject that them with a professor.

"One of the biggest things that it will allow students to do is high-level thinking skills, something other than their dares," he said.

Student Body President Hurd said the program begins in last year's major MSC programs that he had undertaken to help achieve its mission to improve the quality of life and education for 43,000 students of Texas Tech.

"The mission of the Series is the same as the good academic institutions — pose students to a great thoughts, ideas, and experiences," he said.

Jim Reynolds, director of MSC, said the program was conceptualized with the back Vision 2020's goal of furthering intellectual community.

"Ideally, we will eventually have hundreds of professors and members sitting down with seven students to discuss will challenge and stimulate them," Reynolds

## ALCOHOL

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Kibler said the task force looked at all sides of these issues in order to produce recommendations that would be enforceable but not overly restrictive.

"The task force considered lots of alternatives that ranged from just considering it a non-issue to the

other end of the spectrum, which might be to become very restrictive," he said. "[This would] allocate very specific places on campus and try to regulate them with permits. We didn't choose to go to either of those extremes."

The task force's recommendations will be submitted to Texas A&M President Dr. Ray Bowen for approval, following approval from Southerland.

## ABSTINENCE

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"People think sex is a way of showing that you love each other, and it is," she said. "But people who are committed to abstinence and together agree to stay that way, and maintain that abstinence because they love each other and want to save that until

after they get married, that's also a sign of love."

There are 12 million new cases of sexually transmitted diseases reported each year in the United States according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

Texas ranked fourth among states with the highest number of AIDS cases with a total of 48,350 as of Dec. 31, 1998.

## JUSTICE

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Phillips said there is no single answer to improving the selection process.

"Any change would be an improvement over what we have now," Phillips said. "Texas is moving in the right direction, though, and has implemented a cap on campaign contributions for judicial candidates."

Phillips said a poll taken in Texas showed 83 percent of voters believed judicial decisions were affected by campaign contributions. Additionally, the poll found that 79 percent of lawyers and 48 percent of judges in Texas believed judicial decisions were usually affected by campaign contributions.

"Generally, the public is satisfied," Phillips said. "But the system used now will be damaging in the long run to the democratic system."

## NUTZ

BY R. DELU



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