

# AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

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## A walk on the WILD SIDE

BY JULIA RECINDUS  
The Battalion

When a student packs up and makes his or her way to a university, dreams of freedom and personal self-expression seem like they are about to come true.

Decorating one's body with piercings is one form of expression that is very popular, especially with the college crowd. The mind reels at the seemingly endless possibilities of numerous body parts available for piercing: the nose, navel, lips, eyebrow, tongue, nipples and more.

"Facial piercings are the more exotic piercings. A few years ago, if someone had their eyebrow pierced, it was very unusual. Now it's becoming more common," said Jerry Stewart, an artist at Aggeland Tattoo.

He said artists at Aggeland Tattoo have also pierced septums, the bridge of the nose, and the skin above the lip.

Stewart said the most common piercings done at Aggeland Tattoo are tongues and belly buttons.

Stewart said these piercings make up about 75 percent of the job.

Once one has decided where to be pierced, another decision looms ahead — choosing a piece of jewelry.

Choosing a piece of jewelry is a very personal decision that reflects a person's interest or add more flare to their personality. Some go for simplicity and choose a barbell or a ring. Accessories such as charms and chains can be added; one popular accessory is the belly chain, wrap around the person's waist and is connected to the navel piercing. Charms, such as dragons or suns or flowers, are also added to rings for more personality.

Adrian Gardea, a junior psychology major, has two tongue piercings, one eyebrow and a labret (chin) piercing.

Gardea said at one time he had a slave bar in his tongue. A slave bar is like a barbell, except that one end has a ring on it. He said when a couple kisses, the ball of the barbell gets stuck in the ring of the slave bar and the two have to work them apart with their tongues, similar to Chinese finger cuffs.

Rubber tops can also go on the end of barbells in the tongue, known as a "french tickler" or a stimulator.

He said most of the exotic and unusual jewelry must be special ordered out of a catalog, otherwise it will just sit in the store.

When the piercing is actually done, surgical-steel jewelry is used because most people are not allergic or have rejection problems with the material.

Once the piercing heals, customers can then return to purchase jewelry. One piece becoming very popular is the glow in the dark jewelry. It can be charged on an incandescent light making it glow for a certain amount of time, or it will illuminate under a blacklight.

Different gauges, or sizes, of jewelry are also available to allow people to stretch their piercings. The higher the number the thinner the metal, for example, a 20 gauge piece of jewelry is .81 mm thick, while a 8 gauge piece is 3.26 mm thick. Jewelry comes in a wide range of sizes — one gauge size, called the "double all" has

a gauge that is thicker than the width of a ball-point pen.

Those most commonly stretched are the ears, tongues and belly button piercings. Larger gauges can be placed gradually into other body piercings.

Stewart said it is very unusual for people to get large-sized

piercings like the double all.

Now that body piercings are becoming more common, Stewart said customers are walking through the doors of body art establishments more often and are getting piercings on a whim.

"Almost everybody who's come through my door has been scared to death or nervous," Stewart said.

He said he thinks the reason so many are coming in to be pierced is because of peer pressure.

"[Some say] 'My buddy did it, so I'm going to do it,'" he said, "[but] I did it for myself. I like the look and the feel of it. A lot of it's the adrenaline rush. It's a really good natural high. You feel like you can conquer the world; it's something you have to experience yourself," Gardea said.

There have been occasions when something out of the ordinary has happened in the process of getting a piercing.

"One girl came in not intending to get pierced, but we got to talking and she brought up that she had three breasts. Sure enough she did, and we pierced her third nipple. Another girl had an orgasm when we pierced her nipples," Stewart said.

He said a few customers have passed out. "Everybody's different. And it's like they say, your body's a temple — decorate it," he said.

**"Almost everybody who's come through my door has been scared to death or nervous."**

— Jerry Stewart  
Aggeland Tattoo artist



PHOTOS BY GUY ROGERS

## REEL CRITIQUE

MOVIE REVIEWS

**The Whole Nine Yards**  
Starring: Bruce Willis and Matthew Perry  
Directed by: Jonathan Lynn

Bruce Willis and Matthew Perry hit the bulls-eye with the sharp and witty comedy *The Whole Nine Yards*.

Dr. Oseransky (Perry), or Oz for short, is an American dentist in Canada married to a woman who drives him crazy and stuck in a country that drives him crazy. Just when he thinks his life isn't going anywhere, he discovers his new next-door neighbor is Jimmy "The Tulip" Tudeski (Willis), an ex-Mob assassin hiding out from his old boss. After spending some time together, Oz learns to like Jimmy; then Jimmy's wife offers him the divorce he has been wanting — if he goes to Chicago and rats out Jimmy to the mob.

The adventure and laughs begin as Oz continues to get himself in situations that are over his head.

The plot sounds like it should have been a thriller, not a comedy. However, thanks to the deft touch of director Lynn (*Greedy, Sgt. Bilko*) the humor comes to the viewer in a ceaseless barrage. The script writers must be given a lot of credit for taking twists and turns not commonly found in such comedies.

Fast and furiously funny, this movie gives Perry the chance to showcase his sense of sarcastic timing. Make no mistake about it, this movie is all Perry.

Willis is more of a supporting character and really plays the straight man to Perry's humorous antics. That is not to underrate Willis's performance; he delivers a lethally deadpan performance as a hitman with a heart. Factor in a supporting cast which includes the charming Michael Clarke Duncan, the funny Kevin Pollack, and the up-and-coming Amanda Peet and

this movie has wonderful chemistry.

Willis continues his run of "non-action" movies in this pleasantly surprising film which he also co-produced.

Though it is not the sort of movie to win Academy Awards, *The Whole Nine Yards* is pure fun and definitely worth catching at the theaters. (Grade: B-)

— Matt McCormick

**Hanging Up**  
Starring: Meg Ryan and Walter Matthau  
Directed by: Diane Keaton

*Hanging Up* is the first must-see movie of 2000. Touching and funny, this movie is absolutely wonderful.

Eve (Ryan) has a new business, a father in the hospital, two sisters she hardly ever sees and she always seems to be on the phone trying to keep up with everything. This is the story of one sister's efforts to hold her family, as well as herself, together as the family seems to drift further apart.

Brilliantly directed by Diane Keaton and written by Nora and Delia Ephron (*You've Got Mail*), this movie is based on Delia Ephron's book of the same name. Keaton brings an interesting style to the film, particularly in the flashbacks which, while mainly visual, tell a whole story by themselves. This film is a pure joy as it takes viewers through the ups and downs of a family that is unique yet oddly familiar.

Sweet and touching without being pretentious, this movie is more than just a comedy and it is more than just a drama. This movie is a little slice of life made a bit more charming and a bit more poignant because it is on the big screen.

Ryan is absolutely radiant as the big-hearted Eve. In her most lovable and surprisingly deep role in years, Ryan elevates her acting. Matthau turns in the performance to beat for



PHOTO COURTESY OF USA FILMS

next year's best supporting actor Oscar as the gruff but lovable father of the girls. Keaton is great as always, but possibly due to her directing duties, she has a smaller part in this film. Lisa Kudrow continues to grow as an extremely talented movie star.

Warm, humorous and poignant in one, *Hanging Up* offers viewers the chance to experience one of the most enjoyable and satisfying movie events in a long time. (Grade: A)

— Matt McCormick

**Pitch Black**  
Starring: Vin Diesel and Radha Mitchell  
Directed by: David Twohy

Sometimes movie production costs exceed their allotted value and the cast must be thrown together like a WB sitcom, but somehow that is-



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(Top) (L to R) Lisa Kudrow, Meg Ryan and Diane Keaton pay an unannounced visit to their father in *Hanging Up*.

(Left) (L to R) Keith David, Rhiana Griffith, Radha Mitchell and Vin Diesel star in the David Twohy film *Pitch Black*.

n't even the case here — production costs couldn't have been that high.

With an obvious stab at this sci-fi thriller's actors, the real problem wasn't the acting, it was the screenplay. This is one of those flicks that must have been invented in someone's dream, but when the "great idea" gets to the drawing board all excitement is gone.

Awkwardly, the movie begins in deep space without a hint of time relevance, or background. The audience simply goes along with the story line involving a spacecraft's dramatic crash on a far away planet. No one ever finds out what year or galaxy this mini-nightmare takes place in.

In reality this lack of knowledge works in the movie's favor, because the audience can now believe anything that happens on this planet to be real (it's a nifty loop-hole for a movie that would be full of plot holes).

Upon landing on the planet, the crew discover three suns in the sky and conclude the

planet must have perpetual sunlight. Two suns shine yellow light, or a yellow camera lens makes it look yellow, and the third is a blue sun. ... This attempt at coloration is very elementary. But the movie's title definitely gives away the natural progression of this story.

This is when the movie trailers boast "don't be afraid of the dark, be afraid of what is in it."

The film could have been great if the director would have simply killed off every character in a unique, gory manner, but unfortunately the audience has to settle for only a few bloody deaths.

And it concludes like any predictable horror/thriller — no, not sequel ready — but too convenient for reality (if there is a sense of reality in this film).

This movie wasn't a complete loss, it had a couple entertaining moments, but when it comes to thrills *The Beach* produced a bigger jump and that isn't saying much. (Grade D+)

— Jeff Kempf