

# To pierce or not to pierce?

## Xtreme Adrenaline

By Stephen Schroeder  
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No one thinks twice when they see a woman wearing earrings or even a man. But the moment an eyebrow, tongue, nipple, navel or genitalia gets pierced it becomes bizarre.

However, putting it in a global and historic context, it's not bizarre at all. Since the beginning of mankind, people have been tattooing and piercing their bodies.

Ancient Egyptian princesses pierced their navels. Ancient Romans pierced their nipples. From South America to the Arctic, from Africa to Germany and from New Zealand to Asia, millions of people have pierced their bodies for ages and still do today.

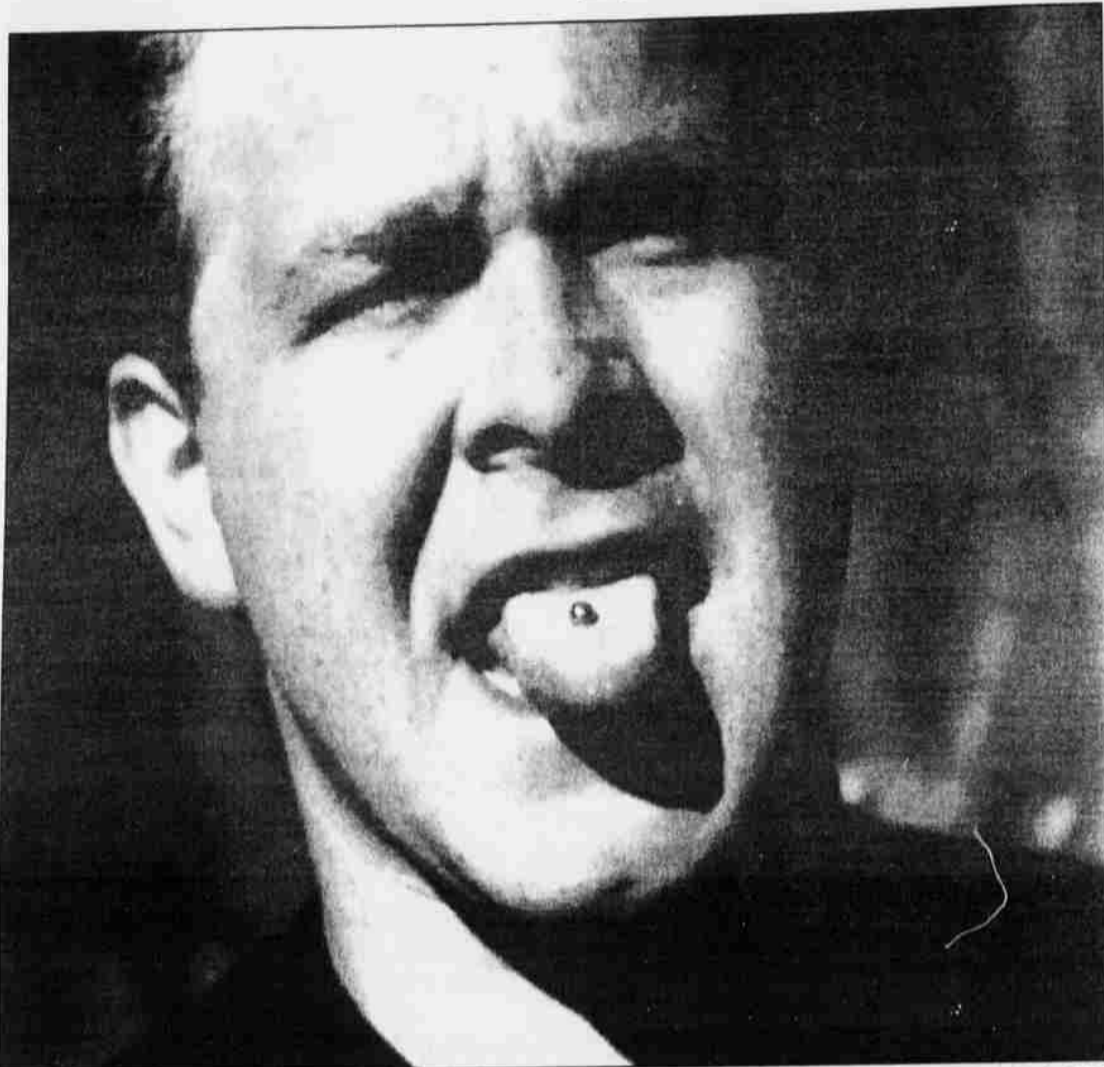
"Some do it as a real response to primal urges and some do it for kicks," says Zapata, a self-described 'modern primitive.'

Native Americans practiced the Sun Dance. They pierced

their chest with two eagle talons attached by a long rope to a tree. They would lean back or suspend themselves off the ground until the hooks ripped through the flesh. Sometimes two days would pass before their skin would break free. The goal in doing this was to induce ecstasy, an altered state, and to meet the great white spirit.

Tattoos have imbedded themselves into American culture, just as piercing has become a part of our everyday life. Body piercing was relatively new to modern America, practiced by only a handful of people in the '60s, compared to millions of Americans today.

Jewelry sales are a multi-billion dollar industry and shows no sign of declining. A variety of jewelry can be bought in different colors, sizes and shapes, to fit your ideal of expression. And as our pierced generation grows old, piercing will be as common



by Stephen Schroeder / The Rebel Yell

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## PRIMAL SQUAT

BY JERRY THOMPSON

