

It's artwork to those who have them

# Tattooing: when skin is the artist's canvas

By Mark McCann  
Of the Emerald

Vickie got her first tattoo at 14: She and a friend were fooling around with a needle and India ink. Now, at 19, she is having her childish experiment "repaired."

"I did it mostly because my parents told me I couldn't. I thought it would be cool." Her husband, Toby, supported her decision to change the small

black cross to a more appealing flower. But when she came home with a second tattoo, Toby was furious. "I didn't mind the one on her finger but I didn't like the one on her breast. I guess it wasn't so much the tattoo, but she got it after I asked her not to."

With the staccato buzz of the needle Vickie flinched in anticipation. As the needle touched her skin she grimaced and

said "If you want to know if it hurts, the answer is yes. I wouldn't have got another one because my husband wouldn't let me, but I guess I'm still a rebel."

Her husband piped in. "I don't think they're right. I wouldn't want anything that I couldn't get rid of if I didn't want it." Vickie replied, "I think they're sexy, they're art."

Allen, also 19, had different reasons for getting a tattoo. "Adornment. Just because I wanted it." The University engineering major continued, "There are lots of tattoos in my family. All my uncles have one. I'm a diabetic and take four shots a day so the pain won't be a problem."

Having a tattoo in the professional world doesn't bother Allen. "One third of the people in the country have tattoos. It's more of a personal commitment. I would classify myself as a non-conformist, but it's up to the individual if their tattoo is going to be non-conformist. This tattoo is going to be art," he said. The design he had was a family sign and was his first tattoo.

Nan Savage, the owner of Tattoo by Design in Eugene, does more "repair" work than anything else. "Tattoos are like sex. Once you get one, it's OK to get more."

Savage has four tattoos herself. "Once you get a tattoo, the stigmas and fears are washed away, and you get another."

As an art student at the University of Minnesota, Savage thought it was natural that she become a tattoo artist. "I went to visit a friend in Alaska who was doing tattoos, and I got one. Pretty soon I was doing tattoos." That was 12 years ago.

Savage didn't like her first tattoo and had it changed. A small black butterfly is now the center of a Japanese flower over her left breast. She also has a Foo dog on her shoulder because she was born in the year of the dog. On her right ankle is a Phoenix surrounded by bats and clouds, and on her left ankle is a rose in a whirlpool. The scenes were

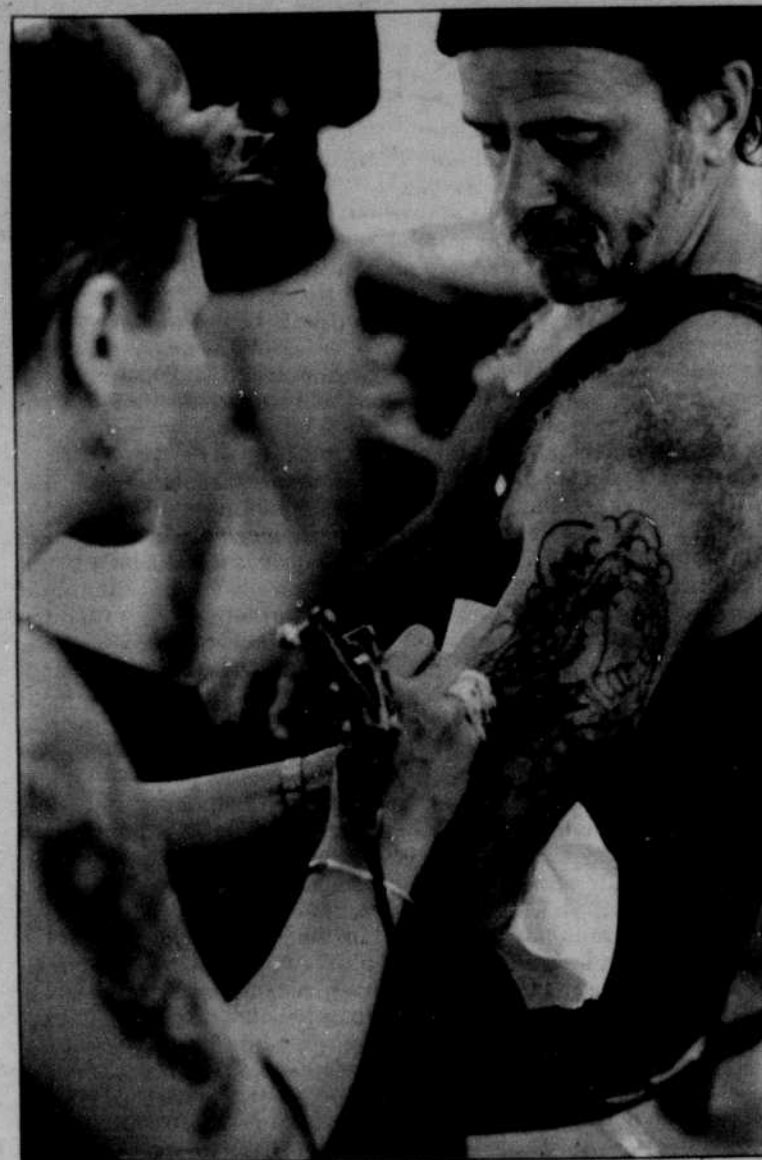


Photo by Sherilyn Bjorkgren

Nan Savage, owner of Tattoo by Design, reproduces an elaborate design on a customer's arm.

done by several different artists at different times.

On the wall of Savage's business are the typical Harley wings, hearts, roses and "In memory of Mom" inscriptions, but Savage said most people bring in their own designs. "Eagles are popular because they're American. I do dragons, flowers and butterflies the most. Unicorns are real popular. Everybody loves dragons."

"Tattoos have no gender," Savage continued. "there is no male or female separation. But talk to a biker, and he'll tell you there is. Usually a person gets a tattoo because a friend has one,

and just as many professionals get tattoos as anybody."

In Japan tattooing is considered an art form. Some men get elaborate tattoos that cover their entire bodies. Japanese men with tattoos have formed clubs and even have their own festival. The main picture goes on the back, and the rest of the work stays within the bounds of a central theme.

According to Savage, "Japanese tattoos have a lot of symbolism, and Americans' are pretty loose."

When a customer calls on

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### Book Views

#### "Old Wives' Tales"

by Susan M. Dodd.

Once in a great while a writer comes along, seemingly out of nowhere, to reestablish the standards of storytelling. In this case it is a writer of intense compassion whose uniqueness stems from a desire to create believable, empathic characters and thematic situations that capture the commonalities of a modern human condition. Her name is Susan M. Dodd and "Old Wives' Tales" is her stunning first volume of stories.

In her story, "Snowbird," an elderly man living in a small apartment complex, having many times refused the polite advances of his next-door neighbor, relinquishes his need for privacy and is drawn to her when a family tragedy shatters her spirit and proper demeanor. A few hours after hearing of her plight the old man reluctantly checks in on his neighbor and discovers the immensity of the emotional blow the woman has received.

"Naked, Myra Glendinning sat in a straight-backed chair, hugging herself. An ornate barricade of pillows and family portraits and music boxes, knitting bags and knick-knacks and candy dishes enclosed her. Metallic light spilled across the floor from the television, but the woman was not looking toward the screen. She was not looking at her astonishing hoard of trinkets. In fact, she seemed to be looking at nothing at all."

"Snowbird" brings together two equally attractive characters (a pattern repeated numerous times in the volume) by showing the basic necessity of companionship (however brief it may be), not as a healing source, but much deeper, as a way of averting the fear of ultimate loneliness.

Susan M. Dodd's "Old Wives' Tales" renews and affirms the tradition of good, solid fiction writing in an age where the mere ability to manipulate the written word oftentimes takes precedence over an author's imagination and ideals. A skillful and unforgettable debut.

Reviewed by — Kerry Paul May

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### MEETINGS

The Herpes Information and Support Group will present Roger Rohloff, pharmaceutical representative from Burroughs-Wellcome. Discussion will focus on current research in drug-related prevention and treatment of herpes, tonight, 7 to 9 at Sacred Heart Hospital, Conference Room 5-Main.

Mortar Board meets tonight at 6:30 in Room 108 Gilbert.

Faith Center College-Age Bible Study meets tonight at 7:30 in the EMU Forum Room.

PRSSA will have a chapter meeting and a guest speaker today at 4:30 in Room 221 Allen Hall.

### MISCELLANEOUS

Gary McNaught will be the guest speaker at the "Passion for Excellence" leadership workshop tonight from 4 to 6 in

Room 110 EMU.

Photographer Dan Root and reporter James Thalman of The Register-Guard will address how to establish a good working relationship today at 3:30 in the EMU Forum Room.

The College of Business Administration is accepting applications for peer advisers.

Applications should be turned in to Room 271 Gilbert by Friday, Nov. 14.

The University Outdoor Program is sponsoring a rock-climbing slide show at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 13 in 150 Geology.

The Career Planning and Placement Service is offering a workshop on internship options today from 2 to 2:30 in Room 237 Hendricks Hall.

A workshop entitled "Choosing a Major," sponsored by Academic Advising and Student Services, takes place today at 3:30 in 164 Oregon Hall.

Thursday, November 6, 1986



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