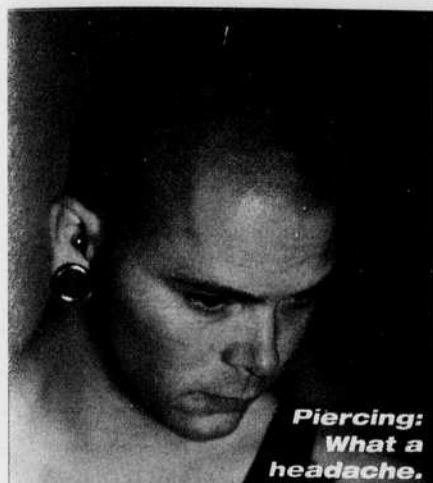




Metal Heads

YOU STUD. YOU HARD, LITTLE stud. I want to screw you on my head. Yes, I do. Because I love seeing you there.

Wait — we're talking implants here. Scalp implants, to be exact. You know, detachable metal studs screwed through your scalp into a metal plate implanted under your skin.

"The procedure involves slitting your scalp and shoving a threaded metal plate in there," says Crystal, a professional piercer from Primeval Body Piercing Studio in Hollywood.

Ouch. The screw-on studs are also interchangeable with other attachments, from small beads to 4-inch spikes — essentially turning your noggin into a Gen X Mr. Potato Head.

Could this be the next logical step for modern primitives following tattoos, piercing, branding and implanting beads under the penis skin? The Association of Professional Piercers says no.

"This is illegal surgery," says APP's Michaela Grey. "Body piercers have no business doing anything but body piercing."

Grey says that injecting anesthetics into the scalp could accidentally anesthetize the brain and cause death. Implants can also result in a fatal brain infection or long-term degenerative damage to connective tissues.

So far only one soul, Joe Aylward, a piercer's apprentice in Phoenix, has had the procedure. Aylward's piercing mentor performed the operation and the duo have defended scalp implants in *Newsweek*, on talk shows and on TV news broadcasts.

"If they kept it private, that's one thing, but exploiting it the way they are might give people ideas," Crystal says. "Like the kids who don't have any money, so they pierce themselves."

But scalp spikes might only be the tip of the trend. A Jim Rose circus member is having coral horns implanted in his scalp. Other piercers are hearing rumors of spine implants. Will the madness stop before American youth become refugees from a Clive Barker film?

"I'd be very sorry to see this one person and his bad idea become a trend," Grey says. "He's been very lucky not to have been killed."

So if you think scalp implants sound cool, you better get your head examined.

By James Hibberd, Assistant Editor/
Photo by Larry Lavender, Tattoo Savage

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Kenneth Wilkins
Rutgers University



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Discover Card

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