



Encyclopedia of Body Adornment

By Margo DeMello

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People everywhere have attempted to change their bodies in an effort to meet their cultural standards of beauty, as well as their religious and/or social obligations. Often times, this modification or adornment of their bodies is part of the complex process of creating and re-creating personal and social identities. Body painting has probably been practiced since the Paleolithic as archaeological evidence indicates, and the earliest human evidence of tattooing goes back to the Neolithic with mummies found in Europe, Central Asia, the Andes and the Middle East. Adornments such as jewelry have been found in the earliest human graves and bodies unearthed from five thousand years ago show signs of intentional head shaping. It is clear that adorning and modifying the body is a central human practice. Over 200 entries address the major adornments and modifications, their historical and cross-cultural locations, and the major cultural groups and places in which body modification has been central to social and cultural practices. This encyclopedia also includes background information on the some of the central figures involved in creating and popularizing tattooing, piercing, and other body modifications in the modern world. Finally, the book addresses some of the major theoretical issues surrounding the temporary and permanent modification of the body, the laws and customs regarding the marking of the body, and the social movements that have influenced or embraced body modification, and those which have been affected by it.

All cultures everywhere have attempted to change their body in an attempt to meet their cultural standards of beauty, as well as their religious and or social obligations. In addition, people modify and adorn their bodies as part of the complex process of creating and re-creating their personal and social identities. Body painting has probably been practiced since the Paleolithic as archaeological evidence indicates, and the earliest human evidence of tattooing goes back to the Neolithic with mummies found in Europe, Central Asia, the Andes and the Middle East. Adornments such as jewelry have been found in the earliest human graves and bodies unearthed from five thousand years ago show signs of intentional head shaping. It is clear that adorning and modifying the body is a central human practice. Over 200 entries address the major adornments and modifications, their historical and cross-cultural locations, and the major cultural groups and places in which body modification has been central to social and

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Entries include, acupuncture, amputation, Auschwitz, P.T. Barnum, the Bible, body dysmorphic disorder, body piercing, branding, breast augmentation and reduction, Betty Broadbent, castration, Christianity, cross dressers, *Dances Sacred and Profane*, Egypt, female genital mutilation, foot binding, freak shows, genetic engineering, The Great Omi, Greco-Roman world, henna, infibulation, legislation & regulation, lip plates, medical tattooing, Meso-America, military tattoos, National Tattoo Association, nose piercing, obesity, permanent makeup, primitivism, prison tattooing, punk, rites of passage, scalpelling, silicone injections, Stalking Cat, suspensions, tanning, tattoo reality shows, tattooing, Thailand, transgender, tribalism.



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Editorial Review

Review

"In this guide, cultural anthropologist Margo DeMello explores the worlds of body adornment and modification. Her survey includes the ornamentation practices of dozens of historic, native and modern cultures, from ancient Greece, Rome and India to Russia, Sudan and new Guinea. Over forty types of body adornment and modification are described and explained. Coverage includes ear shaping, foot binding and scarification. Bodybuilding, fingernail treatments and tanning are presented as types of noninvasive adornment....Intended as an introduction for the general reader, this guide will serve both academic and public libraries." - **Lawrence Looks at Books**

"[A]s an overview of a wide range of body modification practices throughout the world and time periods, this encyclopedia can be a quick starting point. Recommended for public libraries and undergraduate collections." - **College & Research Libraries**

"Presented by the author as the first of its kind to take a comprehensive look at body modifications and body adornment around the world throughout history, this volume is indeed a well-researched, compact reference work, encompassing 207 informative entries, accompanied by 64 black-and-white and color illustrations, an extensive bibliography, a general index, plus resource organization, magazines, and web sites....Written by a well-known and prolific author specializing in cultural anthropology, this volume is recommended to reference collections at large for the benefit of laymen, students, teachers, and scholars alike." - **MultiCultural Review**

"Body modification is a hot topic with social scientists and mainstream culture. While there are numerous report-style resources and celebrity tattoo books, none till this reference have covered the breadth and scope of the field as only a true encyclopedia can....The depth of topics covered will enthrall the casual reader and provide researchers with a tremendous amount of information." - **VOYA**

"Tattooing and piercing may be the first things that come to mind when one thinks of body adornment, but this encyclopedia has a much wider scope, covering all major body modifications and their place in society and culture." - **Booklist/Reference Books Bulletin**

"With over 200 entries, this encyclopedia provides a sophisticated and in-depth analysis of the phenomenon of piercing, painting, tattooing, and all manner of body modification. The author's anthropological approach appeals to both the casual reader and the serious researcher. The photo and illustration quality bring this visual topic to life." - **American Libraries**

"While for many, body adornment and modification brings to mind the pierced and tattooed factions of contemporary youth, the 207 subjects in DeMello's (cultural anthropology, U. of California at Davis) alphabetically-arranged encyclopedia also include animal and human branding, sexual reassignment surgery, makeup, and P.T. Barnum. Additionally, the body adornment practices of major cultural and ethnic groups are discussed, as are individuals key to the popularization and understanding of body modification in the West among them Barnum, whose inked freaks brought tattooing to a wider audience. Entries are cross-referenced." - **Reference & Research Book News**

"Cultural anthropologist Margo DeMello has written the *Encyclopedia of Body Adornment* to create a context for the many types of body modification and adornment found both in societies throughout history

and in various subcultures in the modern world. She skillfully describes practices rooted in tradition as well as contemporary variations on ancient customs. . . . entries on both countries and societies of origin as well as innovators, popularizers, and contemporary groups do a good job of connecting old and new without overly privileging the new. A resource guide, thorough bibliography, and detailed index make the book a good research tool. There are a few tasteful black-and-white illustrations, plus a section of color plates. Each entry includes both specific references and cross-references to other entries. There was certainly potential to make this volume exploitative and provocative, but a professional, matter-of-fact tone makes it a good guide to both social and cultural research into the impulse behind some of today's radical makeover reality shows and fascination with extremes of behavior and body." - **ARBA**

About the Author

Margo DeMello lectures at Central New Mexico Community College, teaching sociology, cultural studies, and anthropology. Her books include *Bodies of Inscription: A Cultural History of the Modern Tattoo Community* (2000) and she has contributed essays to the *Encyclopedia of Human-Animal Relationships* (Greenwood, 2007) and *Cultural Anthropology: The Human Challenge* (2004).

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Thomas Fleischmann:

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Christopher Arredondo:

Precisely why? Because this Encyclopedia of Body Adornment is an unordinary book that the inside of the e-book waiting for you to snap that but latter it will shock you with the secret the item inside. Reading this book adjacent to it was fantastic author who also write the book in such remarkable way makes the content on the inside easier to understand, entertaining means but still convey the meaning fully. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this any more or you going to regret it. This book will give you a lot of advantages than the other book have got such as help improving your skill and your critical thinking way. So , still want to delay having that book? If I had been you I will go to the book store hurriedly.

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