

FEATURES

WWW.GUILFORDIAN.COM/FEATURES

GUILFORDIAN@GUILFORD.EDU

DIY tattoos capture students' imaginations

BY BRIANNA PARKER
STAFF WRITER

Spring has sprung, and students around campus are breaking out their warm weather clothes, hanging out with friends and ... tattooing each other?

In lieu of professionally done tattoos, some Guilford students are turning to the artistic talent of their classmates to stick 'n poke permanent designs on their bodies.

"It's one of those college experiences that you're not necessarily going to regret, but it's definitely an interesting story to tell your grandkids," said senior Amanda Wimer.

Stick 'n poke tattoos, also known as do it yourself tattoos or jailhouse tattoos, are characterized by simple line work. Done by hand, one prick at a time, stick 'n pokes typically use sewing needles or single tattoo needles with black India ink.

"I was pretty weirded out by them at first because they didn't seem very legit, but when I saw a bunch of people around with them, I changed my mind," said one student who wishes to remain anonymous. "It's cool leaving the mark of an artist on your skin."

Although many students have been jumping into the stick 'n poke culture recently, the DIY tattoo phenomenon is not new.

"Stick 'n pokes have been around here at Guilford for as long as I've known about Guilford," said Wimer. "I visited when I was 16, and it was a thing then. It's always been a thing, but it comes and goes in stages."

Students who want to express themselves but do not necessarily have the funds to go to a professional tattoo parlor are turning to their peers to share in the experience of body art.

The effect of stick 'n poking is a communal bond. The specific circumstances in which individuals receive stick 'n pokes vary, but all stick 'n pokers share a common experience.

"(Professional and DIY tattoos) have different memories attached to them, different experiences," said sophomore Liam Midkiff. "If you go to a shop it is all professional and businesslike, so stick 'n pokes are a different experience. Usually, they are going to be done by somebody you know



While a range of reasons exist for receiving a stick 'n poke tattoo, some appreciate the simple images the tattoos naturally produce.

pretty well in a casual setting."

Stick 'n pokes are usually smaller and simpler than professional tattoos because the nature of doing a tattoo by hand, dot by dot, limits the range of images that are feasible to tattoo.

"People get suns and moons and stars a lot," said stick 'n poke artist and first-year Taryn Sneed. "Words are also popular, especially words over the kneecaps."

Sneed said she has been giving and receiving stick 'n pokes since her junior year of high school.

"A lot of people I talk to get stick 'n pokes because they don't really want a professional tattoo but will get a stick 'n poke to see what it's like," said Sneed.

Along with suns and moons, geometric shapes and symbols with various meanings are some of the images you will see on students around Guilford.

"Geometric stuff is easiest because of the simple lines," said sophomore Mackenzie Jones. "But you're just tracing lines, so you can pretty much do anything you want."

Jones, who has tattooed both herself and others, found that tattooing herself is easiest.

"You can feel how hard to push (into the skin) and if you're doing it right, but when you're doing it on someone else, you can't feel the needle and how deep it's going," said Jones.

People who are involved in stick 'n pokes or who want



People often receive stick 'n poke tattoos from people they know.

to be should be aware of the potential risks, like the spread of infectious diseases. Needles should be sterilized and the same needles and ink should never be used on more than one person.

Stick 'n pokes also require the same aftercare as professional tattoos, including the use antibacterial soap and unscented lotion.

Street style: students share their fashion flair

BY QUINCY MALESOVAS
STAFF WRITER

Chelsea Yarborough,
senior

Can you tell me a bit about your outfit?

I am wearing a top I got from Forever 21, a pair of high-waisted jean shorts from Carolina Thrift and my trusty green Docs. As for jewelry, I'm wearing the nameplate necklace my parents gave me for Christmas, a ring that was given to me by a friend and a pair of green earrings from Forever 21.

What influences your style?

My mom and aunts, websites like Tumblr and Afropunk, different people I've met, shows and films like Sailor Moon, Jem and the Holograms, School Daze and A Different World, artists like Juliana Huxtable, Junglepussy, Beyoncé and the all-girl rap group Barf Troop. I listen to music when I dress. I feel that really influences how I put looks together.

Who are some favorite designers?

I love Alexander McQueen, Thierry Mugler and Yves Saint Laurent. I tend to go for designers that don't try to sell me an overpriced version of something I could buy at Value Village.

How adventurous are you with fashion choices?

I really like to mix it up and try new things, but I tend to stick with what I know I like that works on my body. I love to go bold with makeup, especially lipstick, and I wear bright nail polish often.

Chelsea Yarborough '15 is inspired by the fashion choices of her mom, **Junglepussy** and **Thierry Mugler**.

James Rinearson,
sophomore

Can you tell me a bit about your outfit?

I just threw some stuff together today. These are my older brother's shoes that were sitting around the house. My jeans are Levi's. I've had them for years now. My T-shirt is from Urban Outfitters. Most of the time I wear really dark clothes because they are easy and because they match my hair, I guess.

What influences your style?

Being from New Jersey, I was always used to the weather changing throughout the day, so I still think about that when I'm getting dressed. I follow a couple fashion accounts on Instagram that give me ideas. One features high-end, Asian-influenced fashion in New York. Most of it is black, drape-y stuff.

What do you look for when shopping?

I like finding unique things that people wouldn't normally get, like funny T-shirts or weird jackets. I try not to wear anything too outrageous. I got a pair of hippie pants in Mexico that I still haven't yet worn in public. I try to get stuff that suits myself rather than imitating others, but if I do imitate, I adjust it to make it my own.



When shopping for clothing, **James Rinearson** '17 looks for items that feel comfortable and unique to his personal style.