

Primitive urges cling to modern society

Earrings, bodybuilding rituals of modification

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Diversions Contributor

Modern Primitive: A non-tribal person who responds to primal urges and does something with the body. — Fakir Musafar

We're not as modern as we like to think, and more primitive than we like to admit.

All over the place these days it's Modern Primitives this, Modern Primitivism that. But just what — and who — the hell does it mean? Huh? Is it just tattoos, nose rings and pierced penises? Is it just them, you know, those people over there, the ones who aren't like you?

No. It's anyone who shapes or modifies their bodies according to certain rituals, visions, or just because they want to.

I guess that covers just about everybody, doesn't it? Not just people with tattoos and nose rings and pierced penises.

Under the above definition, we're all modern primitives. Everybody

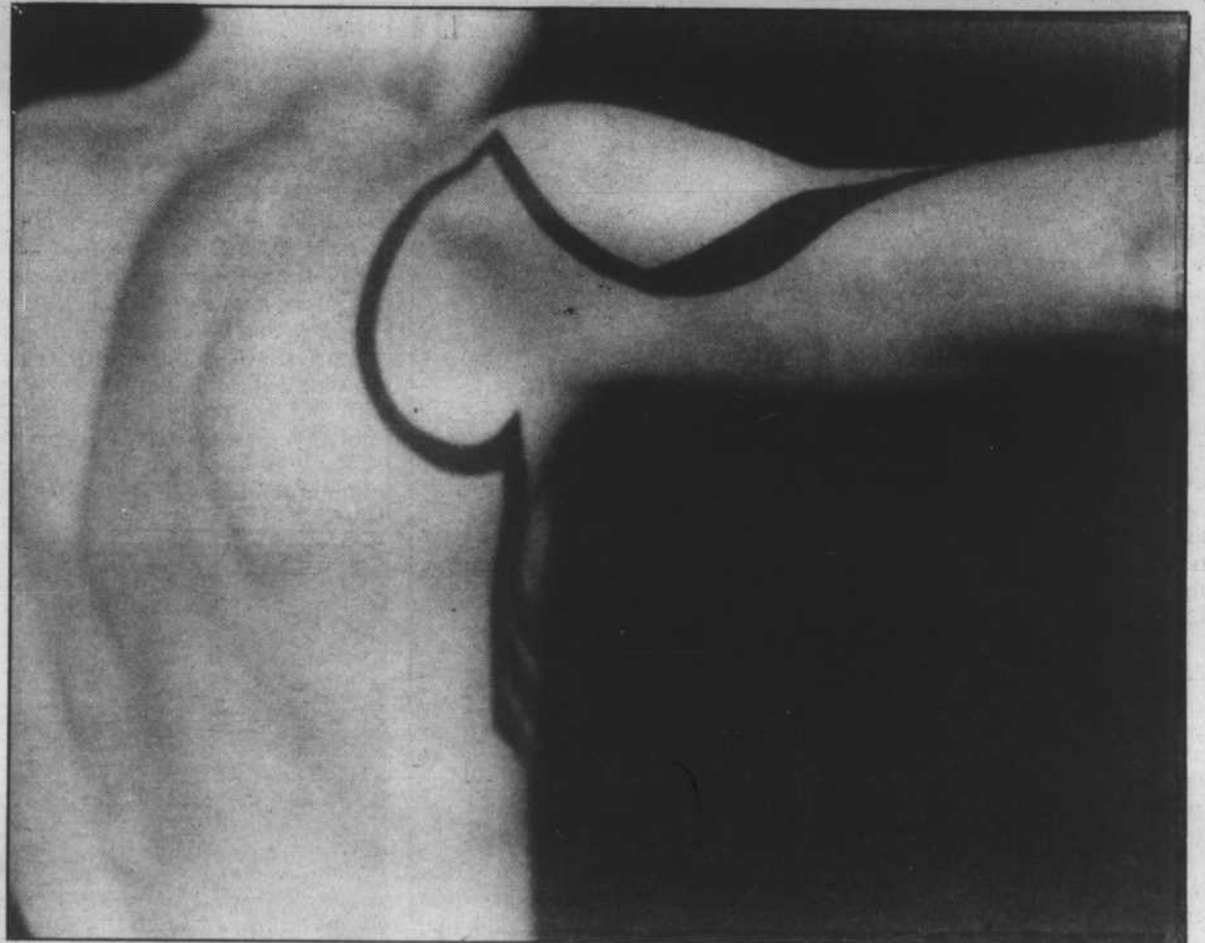
with earrings, bodybuilders, anyone who has plastic surgery — you name it.

Anyone who adorns or shapes their body according to an aesthetic vision — regardless of the origin of that vision and whether they are conscious of it — is practicing body modification, a practice that has been part of human culture since what passes for humanity evolved an attention span long enough to facilitate tinkering.

So every time you hit the gym or the Fake-and-Bake salon, put on makeup, get that nose job you've always wanted or shave your whatever, you are modifying your body, and with it your reality.

Which is exactly the point. Think about all the time people spend modifying their bodies in "socially acceptable" ways — things like short hair for males, leg shaving for females — and realize that body manipulation is an integral part of our fine and dandy,

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