

For the last 10 years of my life I have worked side by side with tattoo artists and body modification specialists alike. In those 10 years I have seen establishments overload their business with individuals who have no place in working with blood borne pathogens let alone customers. Fortunately I have had luck, that every shop I had worked for had owners that cared about the reputation of tattooing and informing the customer.

Lets start with the notion of informing that customer. The majority of new clients, and some seasoned tattoo receivers are not made aware that there is mandatory requirements such as blood borne pathogen certifications etc. And through getting blood work, speaking with nurses, doctors and so on. I have never received this information from anywhere outside of a tattoo shop informing its customers. If we do not have tattoo artists involved with their state wide license regulations then we are depriving the customers a opinion that could sincerely benefit them. Lets circle back to nurses and doctors quickly. Two professions, that much like tattooing deal with scared customers, blood, contaminants and other bodily fluids. Two professions that have a board to respond to, lead by those who have done it before them and know what they are talking about in regards to their own field.

After a 2 minute google search I can give you names such as Allyson Duffy, Doctor of Medicine, Carol Ekonomides, Physician Assistant, Marie C. Eugene, Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, Robert A. Green, Doctor of Medicine. Or another way to categorize this group of individuals and credentials is by saying Connecticut Medical Examining Board. Along with this information I was made aware that there are portals to information for the public, how to make sure my doctor is reputable, and what the medical education requirements are. Now as a non-politician and non-medical field employee. This basic knowledge was provided to me in huge part by medical professionals who have spent their time in the field and have done the education needed to speak on my behalf for whats best for me. Why don't tattoo artists who have spent their lives building this community have the right to decide what is best for their customers and fellow artists alike? But why stop there. Teachers can take on a teaching assistant every year. Usually the teacher, a person who's sole purpose is education, once far enough in their career can take on this assistant. The assistant is usually towards the end of their education, nearly ready to take on their own classrooms work one on one with the head teacher. If I was a student I would be a little concerned if I was placed with a teacher with no previous experience dealing with children or was one of the head teachers 6 assistants. And a apprenticeship should be no different. A apprenticeship for art, and public relations is exhausting both mentally and physically, you are doing unpaid work in hopes that you have what it takes to overcome what held you back. The biggest part of a apprenticeship is while finding yourself as a artist in a brand new medium, you are learning how to keep people safe, sanitary and comfortable. These tasks can only be truly learned one on one by someone who's reputation suffers with yours when the task isn't completed to the best of their ability. The job of mentor is a day to day operation that can only be done in the field by another tattoo artist because I could have my masters in teaching, but I still wouldn't understand how to run a classroom or handle one on one student issues without a guided lesson from someone who was in my position first. And tattooing is no different.

To repeat, I know I have compared tattoo artists to various medical professionals and our education system. And I stand by that. Tattoo artists should have a place on their state wide license regulations, Tattoo artists should be the only form of education for the next generation of tattoo technicians, and lastly that should be done 1 on 1 with one artist and one apprentice at a max of 2 apprentices per establishment to provide proper attention.

Thank you for taking the time to read.
-Myranda Laurito