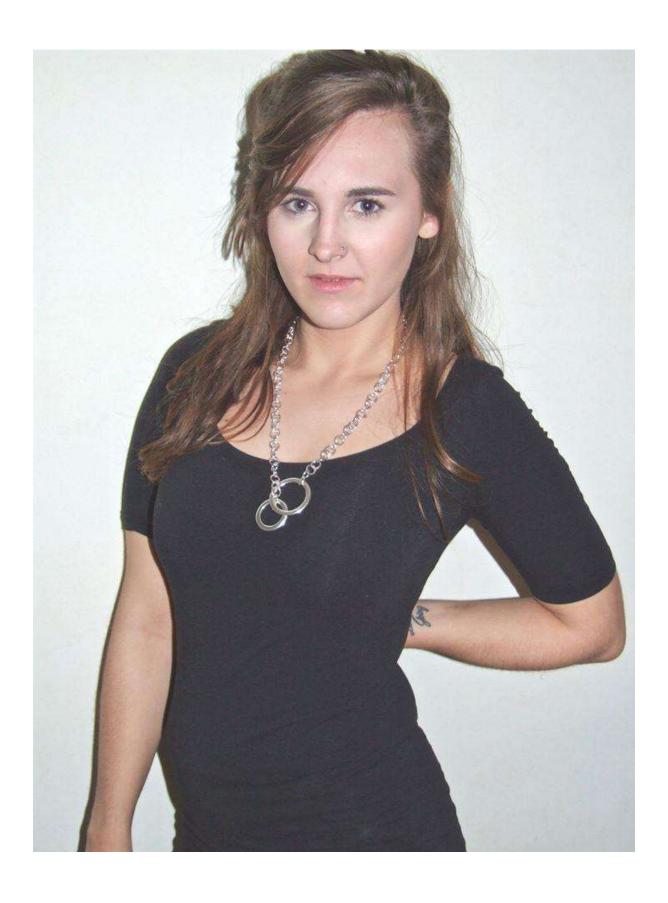
Hidden in Plain Sight



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Hidden in Plain Sight

I have designed and made functional BDSM objects that reflect specific fetishes and are disguised as contemporary jewellery.

Part of my inspiration for this project are belts, clothes pegs and candles. They are functional and unsuspecting everyday objects that are often used in 'kink' for restraint, sadomasochism and asphyxiation. This secret purpose highlights the way BDSM thrives in our society, functional on the outside, with 'kink' just below the surface.

BDSM and sexual fetishes are becoming increasingly more acceptable, with mainstream sex shops like Anne Summers and the erotica series 50 Shades of Grey, sex toy sales have soared and many more people are exploring their kinks guilt free.

But the line between what's acceptable and what's not will always vary and even people who embrace and are proud of their fetishes might feel the need to hide their interests.

There are many different fetishes and kinks that people have but mostly I focussed on Dominant/submissive roles in BDSM play. This is because a lot of types of role play etc. tends to have a Dominant people and submissive people.

I decided to use jewellery as a way of disguising the fetish objects because it is already to be worn on the body. This is useful because it would be accessible at all time for convenience. It is also, to the wearer, a reminder of its alternative purpose at all times.



Chain Experimentation

I realised that a number of the pieces I was going to design would involve chains. Therefore, I initially began by experimenting with various materials, shapes and thicknesses of chain so I could see which would work the best.



 ${\it Material\ experiments-colour\ and\ thickness}$



Material experiments – colour

Chain experiments – Material strength





- I used copper and steel wire to make different chains.
- I experimented with shape, size and thickness to determine which would be strongest.
- I also soldered some links and not others to see how much more strength a soldered link could stand.

Copper Links were very weak, if they were not soldered they would open under very little pressure. If they were soldered they would not open but would bend very easily. If the copper was annealed, then the links would break and bend even quicker.

I also considered using silver but as copper and silver have very similar qualities I did not want to spend too much money experimenting with silver.

Steel Links were quite resistant, even when they were not soldered they would not move much.

Choke Collar Necklace



Context

In a lot of D/s (Dominant/submissive) relationships being collared is a sign of commitment. When the dominant person buys the submissive a collar this is seen as a display of trust as well as ownership

There are many different types of submissive such as slaves, masochists, brats and pets but, for simplicity, I will use "submissive" as a general term.

The submissive is usually supposed to keep the collar on at all times unless the dominant gives them permission to remove it. Some people choose to have a lock on the collar so that only the dominant can unlock the submissive.

As it is unusual to wear a collar in public, some people chose to wear a necklace or choker as a symbol. For this reason, I thought it would be interesting to make a subtle but functional collar.



She Said Boutique Brighton

I spoke to a friend of mine who is into puppy play to ask about collars. He is in a 'pack' so it is not as simple as most Dom/sub relationships, each dog/pup has a rank such as 'Alpha' which would be the more dominant and the leader of the pack. My friend is quite low down in the pack rank as he is younger and fairly new to the scene.

Me - I am doing a project on BDSM this year, at the moment I am researching collars as I'm going to make one within the next few weeks, and I remembered you're into puppy play. Do you mind talking about it a bit? Obviously I won't use your name in my project unless you want me to.

L (Puppy) - Hey! I'm down to help in any way I can :) xx

Me - What sort of collar do you have? What is it made out of? What style? etc.

Was your collar given to you? as an ownership/commitment gesture? (I know that's a thing with human/pet relationships, wasn't sure about packs)

Could I maybe see a pic?

L - I have 3 collars so I'll tell you about each one. :)

My 'Lifestyle/Commitment' collar is a large stainless steel choke-chain, I bought it myself as a way of committing to the lifestyle, however it now has a metal tag on it with my name and a serial number attached which is from my owner, and so both the collar and the tag attached have become a symbol of my commitment to both my own and the BDSM/Submissive Lifestyle.

I have 2 'play collars', these collars are for when I'm in a 'scene' or doing something in which it feels more appropriate to wear a more typical BDSM collar. They are both made out of some form of leather, though I wouldn't be able to say what and they both have some metal pieces on them, one has spikes, the other has bones. I bought these as well. Play collars are primarily inexpensive as you can just go to any pet store and buy a collar for a dog.

Me - That's really interesting! I was thinking about making something more similar to a choke collar so I'm glad you actually have one, haven't seen many people with them. Is the choke one not very practical then? I can imagine your skin could get trapped in the slip link? does it work well for asphyxiation? I'm assuming the choke chain is your favourite for sentimental reasons, but which one is the most comfortable/practical?

L - The choke one is practical enough but depending on what you are doing, due to its weight it can weigh down your neck or on your chest. I would say the most practical is a basic leather collar with D or O-Rings attached. It's simple, close to the body, light weight and can be used in a variety of ways

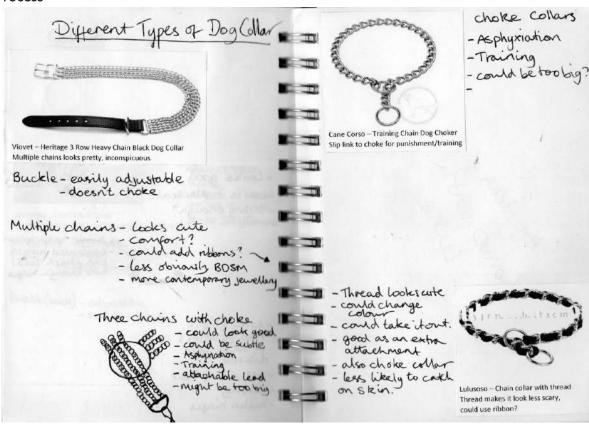
Yeah my choke chain is the most sentimental to me, it's rare that I don't wear it for that reason

It works really well for asphyxiation, but it also works well for in public, having a lead attached and being walked around say at a pride, it means I can't run off as I'll be yanked back.

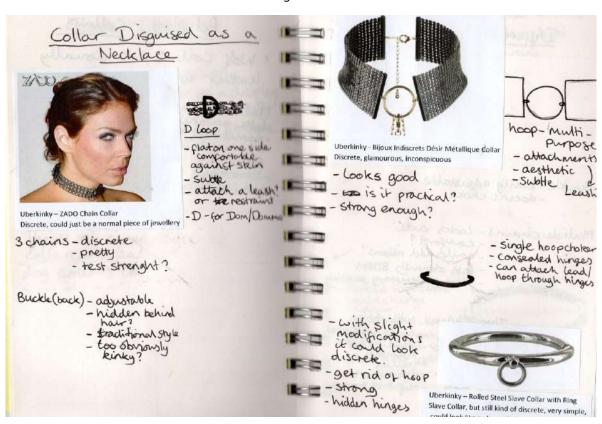


My friend's stainless steel choke collar

Process



Dog Collars



Collars that are already discreet

I thought I would have to make a collar and a separate leash with a handle. I experimented with Fimo to find a shape for the handle. The handle had to look unsuspecting and subtle but still have grip.

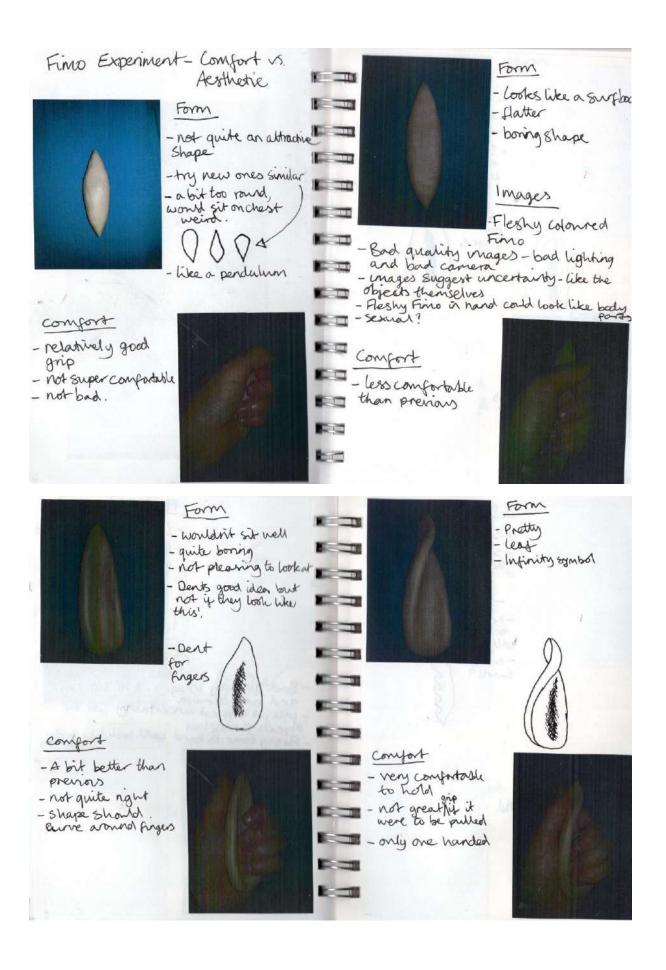
These are a couple of the shapes that I tried but I was not happy with the result so I had to think of something else.













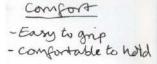
Form - Seashell - suits need to be more

-needs to be pretty from all angles - more Swirts?

defined



Form -sea shell Ear?? is it just because of the fleshy colour?





- Comportable on with both hands - eary to grip



More Handle Ideas



Form

- · Slimmer than previous designe
- o more inconspicuous
- o strange shape to have as a recklace

Same Handle Upside Down



Form

- o OOPS! Image wrong meant to be upside down!
- o se looks more delicate
- o gnore inconspicuous
- o perdulum · slender



- o ridges at top and botton good for grip + confeit
- o Stops hand slipping

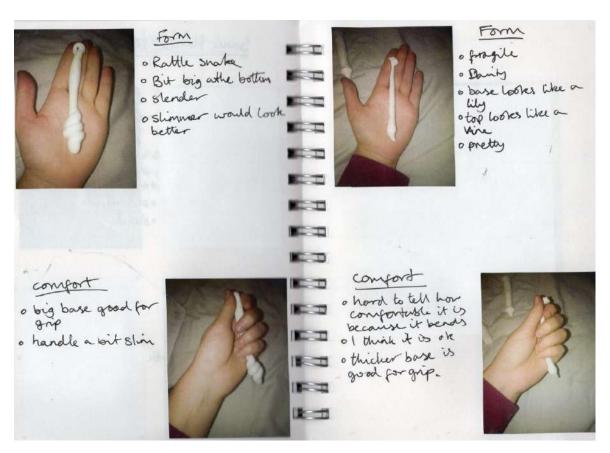


confort

- o Thicker at base
- oless chance or slipping o relatively confortable







Instead of having a handle attached to the necklace I decided the necklace should be a collar without a leash. The most effective and aesthetic way of doing this is a simple choke chain necklace style. This way the necklace can be attached to either a leash or be locked to things for restraint and control. This is similar to slave and pet collars.

It also resembles the ring given to O in the famous erotic novel The Story of O about BDSM. In the 1970s film adaptation O is given this ring as a symbol that she is owned.



The ring from The Story of O

More chain experiments – silver and steel



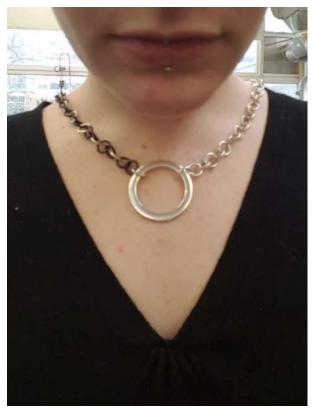


Two steel links to one silver link, one steel link to two silver links





Silver chain next to steel and silver chain, on wooden surface and on skin





Silver chain and silver and steel chain against skin and against black top

Originally I wanted the chain to be silver for the choke chain necklace but after it was made I wanted to experiment with the combination of steel and silver.

I really liked the aestetic of steel and silver next to eachother. I tried lots of different combinations but my favourites were two steel links then one silver link and two silver links then one steel link. In the end I decided that two steel links looked better next to my skin as the black was more of a contrast, it also made the silver links stand out because there were less of them.

The silver chain and the silver and steel chain look really nice next to eachother against my skin and the wooden table but it would be too big to have as one piece of jewellery.

I also looked at the contrast between the silver chain and the steel and silver chain against my skin and a black top. The steel chain stands out against my skin more than the silver chain and the silver chain stands out more against the black top, but the steel and silver chain also looks really nice against the black top because the few silver links look like they're floating.

In the end I chose the silver chain for the choke chain necklace but I decided to use the steel and silver chain for another piece.

I also experimented with different textures and finishes for the silver chain. I tried matte, white and shiny finishes but decided that polished would look the best and be the easiest to maintain. I also tried hammered textures on the surface but it looked like there was too much going on and often hammered textures are used to hide soldering mistakes.

Slave Bangles



Context

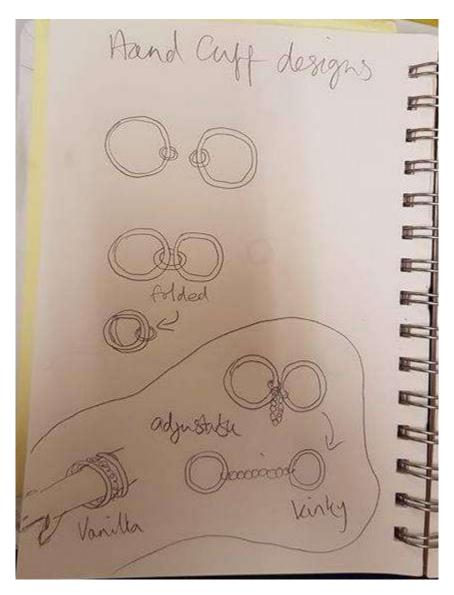


Steel handcuffs (left) from Uberkinky and Leather Wrist Cuffs (right) from She Said

Slave bracelets/cuffs/shackles are similar to collars in that they are a symbol of ownership. The Dominant person may use wrist restraints to keep the submissive person in place and unable to 'escape' during play.

The most basic form of wrist restraints are traditional handcuffs as seen above (left). However, in BDSM play wrist cuffs, which often have links so you can connect them to each other, are generally preferred. These types of restraints are more practical in use because they can be detached and reattached more easily. They can also be used in conjunction with ankle restraints to form a 'hogtie'.

Because I was making wrist restraints, it was clear that the most appropriate type of jewellery would be either bangles or bracelets. Having researched a variety of wrist restraint equipment, I noticed a common theme was that they consisted of a solid structure around the wrist. This is presumably because it is more secure. Because of this I decided that bangles would be more appropriate than a bracelet, as a chain bracelet would not be as secure.



These are my initial sketches for the bangles. Firstly, I worked on the idea that there would be two bangles, one on each arm, with a connecting clasp on each (top sketch). The bangles could be worn separately as jewellery, but then connected to form cuffs. However, there were a couple of issues with this design. First, with the wrists connected so close together, movement would potentially be restricted too much and it would be difficult for the Dominant person to attach them around external objects, such as a bed frame. Additionally, I decided that it would be better if the piece could be worn as jewellery on one wrist because this would look less obvious and be subtler than wearing two bangles.

To make this into one piece, I realised that the two bangles would have to be connected by a chain. By doing this, the piece could be subtly worn on one wrist as a bangle but then turned into cuffs by removing one of the bangles and attaching it to the other arm (bottom sketch). Happy with this design, I decided to make it.





Initial bangle design as jewellery (left) and as cuffs (right), in silver

At first I made the whole piece in silver. I was pleased with the style and the overall design of the piece. I felt that, as jewellery the bangle was aesthetically pleasing and, importantly, it was not at all obvious that it had a second kinky purpose. This was in line with the overall plan for the project. I was also pleased with the functionality. The piece was definitely strong enough to work as wrist restraints.

Whilst I was happy with this initial design, I made this before I had carried out the experiments with silver and steel chains for the choke chain necklace. Despite deciding to use just silver on the choke chain, I still liked the combination of silver and steel and so I decided to see how it would look with the bangles. Having done this, I decided that it made the piece more aesthetically pleasing and so I decided to keep it.



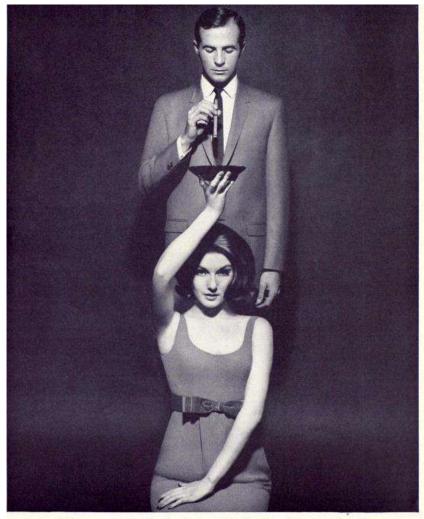
Finished design for Slave Bangles

Smoking Ring



Context

There are many ways smoking is involved in BDSM and sex, most commonly the association with a cigarette after sex. A lot of people have smoking fetishes for example some people are attracted to smokers and some find smoking themselves arousing. In BDSM people often use smoking as a form of degradation such as blowing smoke in someone's face, ignoring the other person whilst having a cigarette, some even tap ash on to the other person, in their mouth or put out cigarettes on their skin using them as an ashtray.



Why are more single girls switching to cigar smokers?

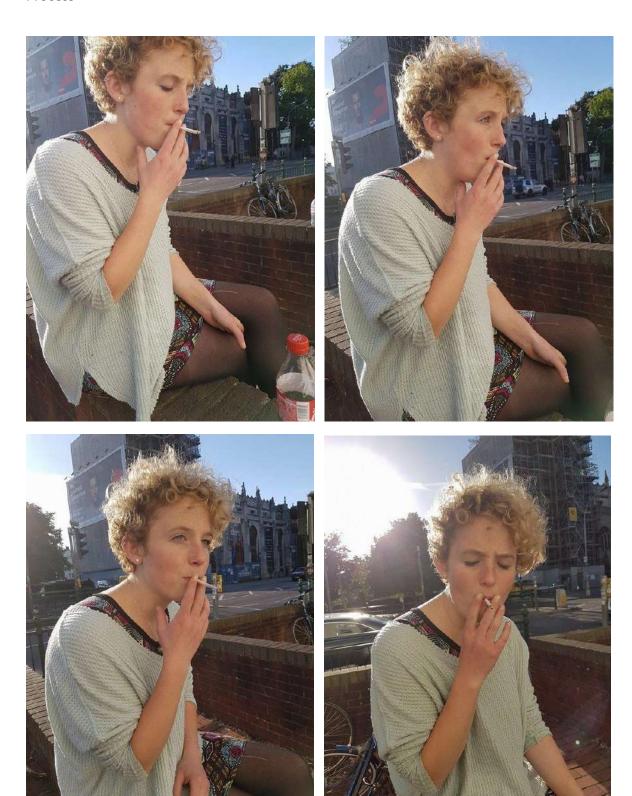
Chances are she saw him before he saw her. She knows he'll treat her as he would a cigar; tenderly, affectionately, appreciatively. What's more, cigar smokers start young and stay young ... very important for girls with long range plans. and everyone knows you need not inhale to enjoy the rich flavor.

CIGAR INSTITUTE OF AMERICA, INC.

The most effective way of advertising smoking in the 60s and 70s was sex. After tobacco companies could no longer claim that smoking was good for your health they used adverts claiming that women were more attracted to men if they smoked.

Now I think that smoking is sexy for a different reason – because it's naughty. We're told not to smoke from a young age and so we're naturally attracted to it. The 'bad boy/girl' fantasy is very apparent in BDSM.

Process



Smoking images



Smoking images

From watching people smoke and being a smoker myself it is clear that the most important thing is that it's practical. It needed to be comfortable to smoke and easy to hold.



Copper Cigarette Ring

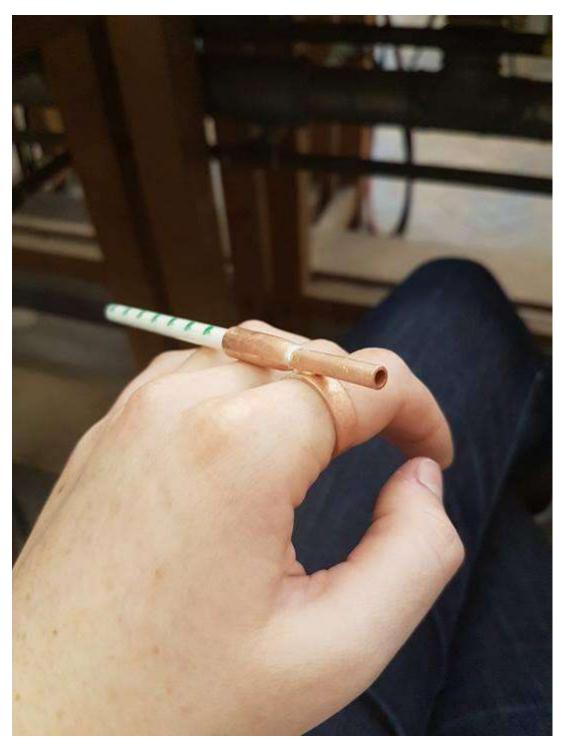
This is the first version of my cigarette ring. There was something wrong with it and it took me a quite a while to figure out what it was.



Cigarette Ring



I tested to see if the cigarette ring would work for putting out cigarettes or for burning people.



The ring could not be worn like this with a lit cigarette in it because it would burn your fingers.



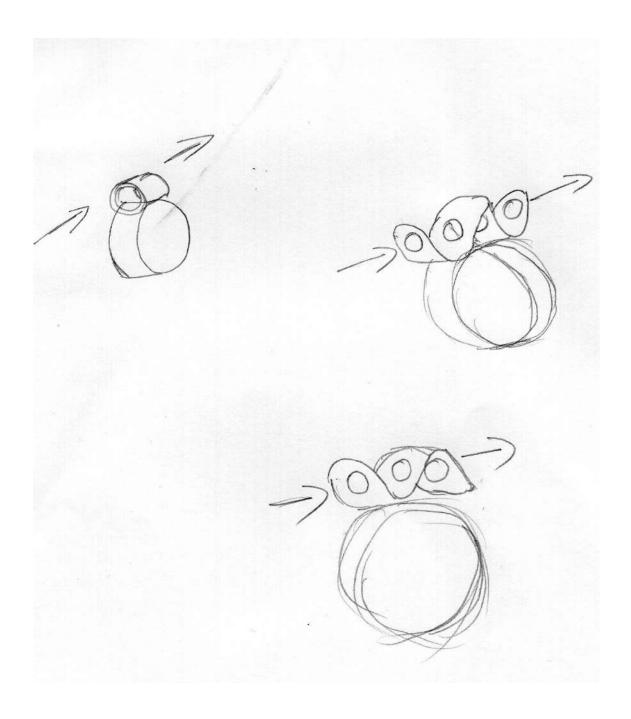
Whilst using the ring to smoke it would have to be adjusted to a different angle and along the finger to avoid unwanted burns.





Eventually I realised that the reason it did not work as part of this collection is that it is too obviously meant to be used as something else. The ring is too big and attracts too much attention, I wanted this collection to be subtle and unsuspecting.

I had to redesign the ring so that it would be subtler. I decided to do this by taking away all the features that made it look like a cigarette holder and make it look more like a ring.



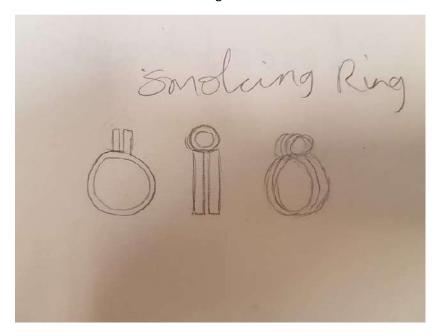
Sketches for new, more subtle ring design. Initially I favoured the piece with the cylindrical cigarette holder (top left) and so I decided to make a prototype.





This is the prototype design for the ring with an open cylinder cigarette holder at the top. Whilst this was subtler in design than the original ring, as a piece of jewellery I felt that it would not be aesthetically pleasing. However, the biggest issue was the way that the cigarette holder was placed adjacent with the ring, meaning that it would be impractical for smoking.

The issues with my two initial designs made me realise that the final piece would have to include a holder that went across the finger, to make it practical for smoking, and was open at both ends to allow it to be worn on either hand without burning the wearer.



These are the sketches I made for the final piece. I thought that it would be more practical to make two small cylinders to hold the cigarette. The reason it is more practical is because when a cigarette is placed in it, it is less likely to move. I also found this design to be more aesthetically pleasing than the solid cylinder, and thought I could continue that theme into the ring itself.

I decided to make this design from silver, firstly because it would match the other pieces in the collection, and secondly because if I used steel it would look messy when soldered and stain the wearer's finger.





Completed cigarette holder ring, in silver.

Sounding Necklace



Context

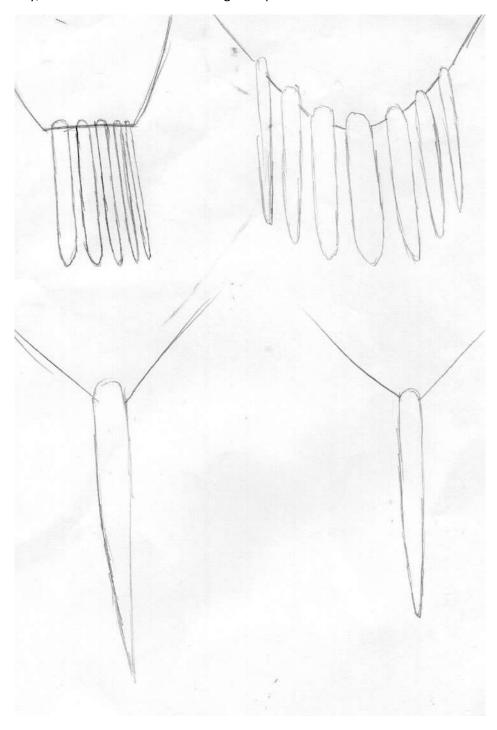
Sounding is the act of inserting objects at the tip of the penis into the urethra. It is often a dominant person doing this to the submissive as it can be painful or feel uncomfortable at first. Below is a typical sounding implement. Given their purpose, they are often long and thin but some people aim to stretch their urethra so thicker sounds are available.



Probe Silicon Sound by Uberkinky

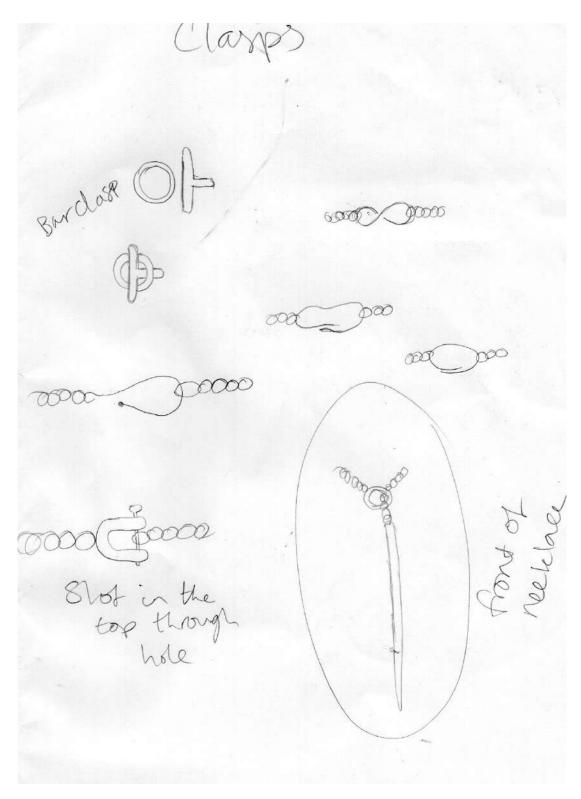
Process

Because of its unusual shape, the only way I could incorporate a sound into jewellery was as a necklace. I decided to design a long thin pendant, attached to a necklace, which could be used as a sound. Initially, I looked at the idea of including multiple sounds of different thicknesses.



Sounding Necklace Ideas

I decided that the necklace would be too busy for multiple sounds. I couldn't find a way of making it look good, so I decided to just make one sound for the necklace.



Clasp Ideas for Sounding Necklace

I decided to go for a visible clasp in the front of the necklace so it can be adjusted from the front.



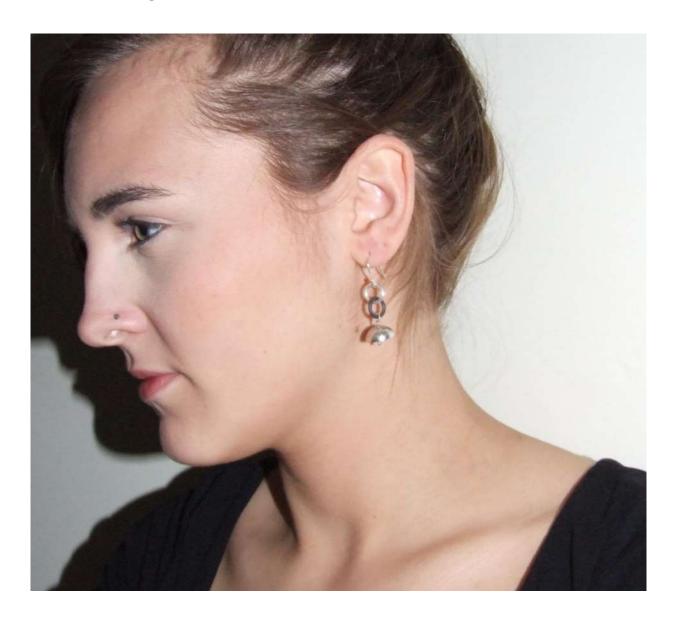
Sounding necklace with steel and silver chain

Having been satisfied with my design I made the sounding pendant out of silver. I decided to see how the necklace would look with the steel and silver chain that I had previously used in other pieces. I felt that this worked well. Whilst seeing how the chain looked I put the pendant through a link in the chain, this worked fine practically but it didn't look quite right. Therefore, I decided to make a larger silver loop for the pendant to fit through.



Finished Sounding Necklace

Slave Bell Earrings



Context

Slave bells were traditionally attached to anklets as a reminder to the slave and to others every time they take a step that they are owned. This tradition has been adopted in the BDSM world and can be used by a Dominant person as a sign of their ownership of the submissive person. As can be seen in the picture below, slave bells are commonly attached to ankle/wrist restraints or to collars.

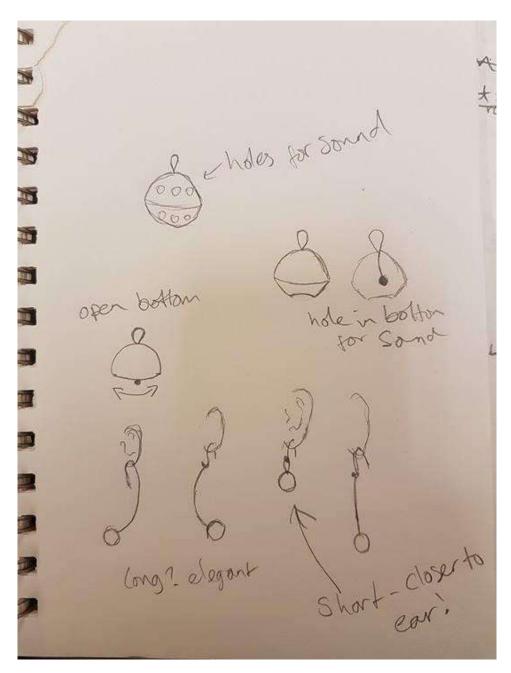
The use of bells is also relevant to 'pet play'. This branch of BDSM involves the submissive person taking on the role of a pet. Because real pet collars often come with a bell attached, this is a common attachment on collars worn by human 'pets'.



Slave Bells by Sensation Play Shoppe

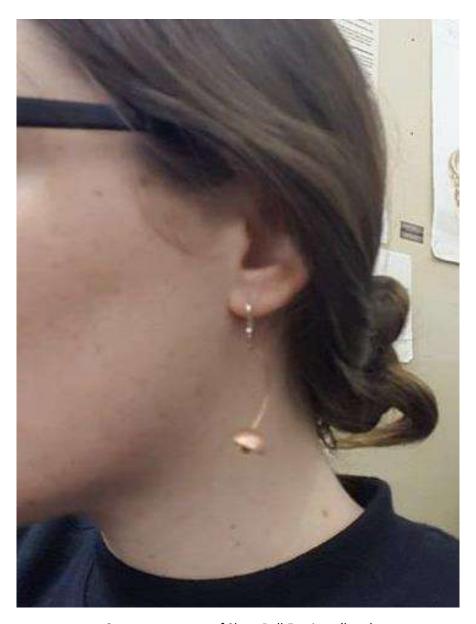
Process

Because the key theme of my project was subtlety, I thought the best way to incorporate slave bells into jewellery was by attaching them to earrings. This would allow the wearer to hear the bells clearly whilst the sound would not be detectable to others.



Initial sketches of Slave Bell Earrings

As I could not tell which design would work better, I decided to make a few prototypes of closed bells and open bells to experiment.



Copper prototype of Slave Bell Earrings (long)

I also experimented with the length of the bells. From the sketches I thought a longer bell might look more interesting and also swing more, allowing the bell to ring but when I made the prototype it didn't look as good as I'd imagined. It also did not swing as I'd hoped.



Copper prototype of Slave Bell Earrings (short)

Having been disappointed by the longer earrings I decided to adjust the length to make them shorter. The earrings at this length still swung the same amount and they were closer to the ear so the sound would be heard more clearly by the wearer. The shorter length also looked subtler. The only problem with this design is the wire attached to the bell, it lessened the sound slightly and didn't look quite right.



Finished Slave Bell Earrings

I decided to use a steel and silver chain link to attach to the earring. This made the earrings more in keeping with the rest of the collection. It also helped the bells swing better because there was not as much strain on the moving bell. I also used antiquing fluid on the inside of the bell so it matched the blackness of the steel link.

Hair Chain



Context

Hair pulling is a common act in BDSM. Not only does it cause pain to the submissive, it can be used to restrain them or to manoeuvre them, for example dragging them by the hair to a desired position.

Some Dominants choose to incorporate hair into rope bondage, this is often referred to as 'hair corsets'. Rope bondage is used to tie a submissive up and keep them in one position. By using the hair in bondage, the Dominant can further ensure that the submissive is unable to move or 'escape'.



Process



Initially I started by just pulling my own hair, it did not hurt when pulling all of it from a distance



But when I pulled it with a hair clip all together some areas pulled the hair more and it hurt.



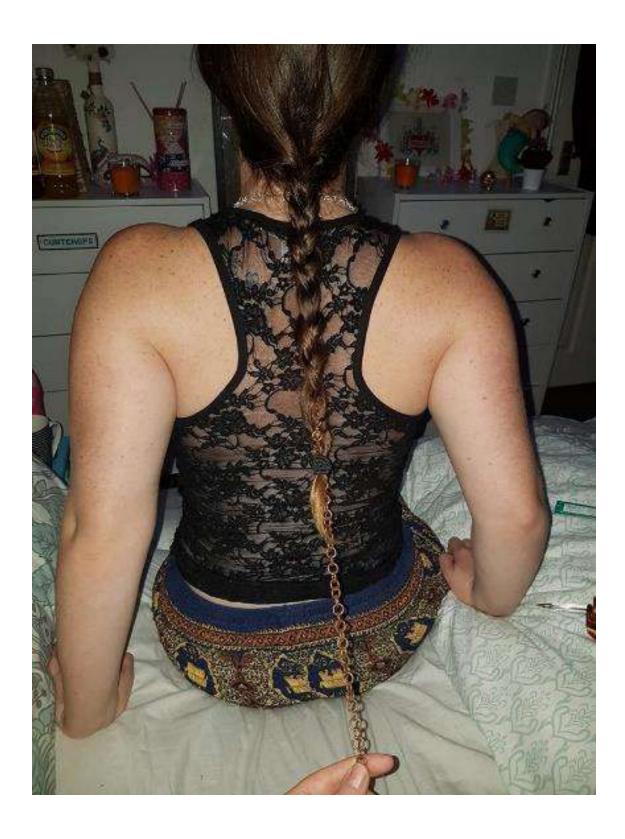


I experimented with putting objects in hair to see what would hold better and what would look interesting. I did not like either of these methods. Sewing through hair is not practical and did not hold the hair together.





I experimented with a wire head massager. This tangled the hair a lot so it was quite painful but when it was pulled it came straight out. This was not what I wanted.



I had some copper chain left over from the original chain experiments, I decided to tie this in with a hairband and plait it into the hair. This was a very efficient way of gathering all the hair.





I experimented with hair pulling to see what would be needed from the hair chain. I noticed that if only a little bit of hair is pulled it is more painful and the Dominant person would have control through pain.

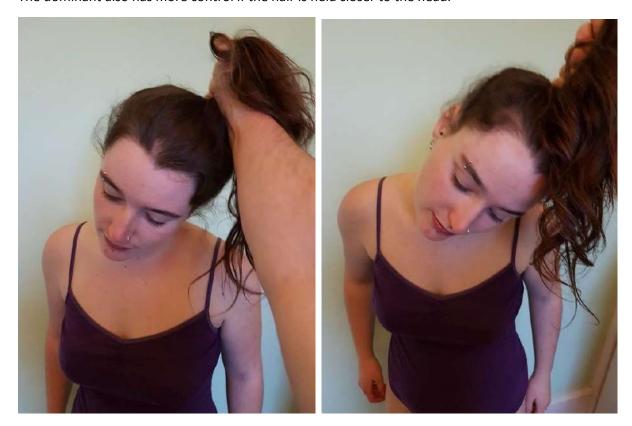




But if the hair is pulled all together the Dominant person has control because of force. It is very difficult to resist.



The dominant also has more control if the hair is held closer to the head.



I decided that for the hair chain to work it would have to hold all or most of a person's hair and hold it close to the scalp.



I decided I would continue the theme of silver and steel chain to use as a hair restraint. The colours worked well with the colour of my hair, the steel was almost hidden so it looked like the silver links were floating. It also worked well when plaited in my hair, the silver links would show through slightly.





Hair Chain Sketches

Above are some sketches for the initial design of the hair chain. I originally thought it would have to have three chains, one for each section of the plait.



Plaiting the chain into hair

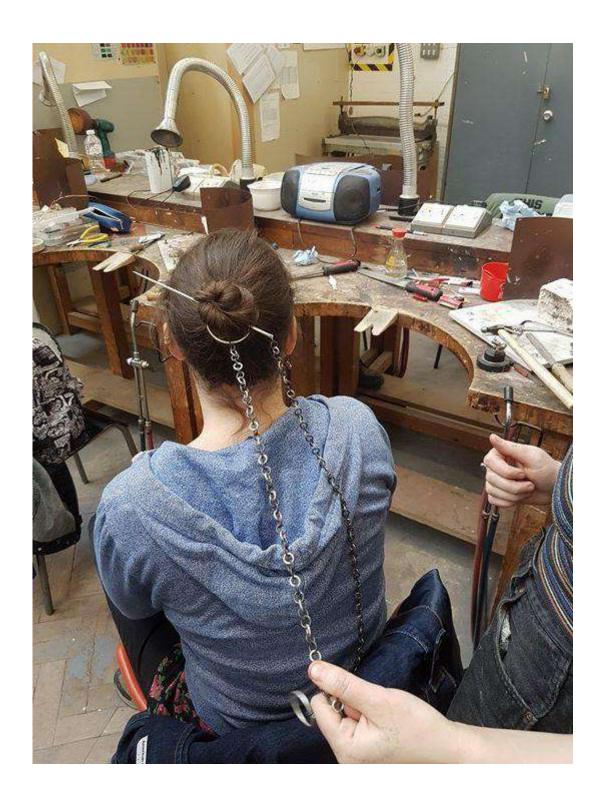
When the chain was made I had some problems attaching the chain to the hair. Originally I thought that I could just plait it in because I had done it before but this time it didn't work. I tried different ways and figured out that it had to be French plaited into the hair so that it wouldn't move and could withstand a lot of pulling.



Although the French plait method worked well I decided to try some different ways of attaching it to hair. They had to look good and be able to stand a lot of pulling. This method could look quite good...



But it could hardly stand any pressure. With just a light tug it fell out almost straight away.



The other method I tried was a bun, I tied the bun with a hair band and pressed the loop through it. I also added a spike through the bun, this gave it more stability so it wouldn't come undone.



Finally, I tried French plaiting the chain into the hair with a spike through the top loop, it is not necessary to keep the chain in the hair but it does look better. I made a different spike with a shorter chain for the final piece. This could be worn in either a plait or a bun.



Photography

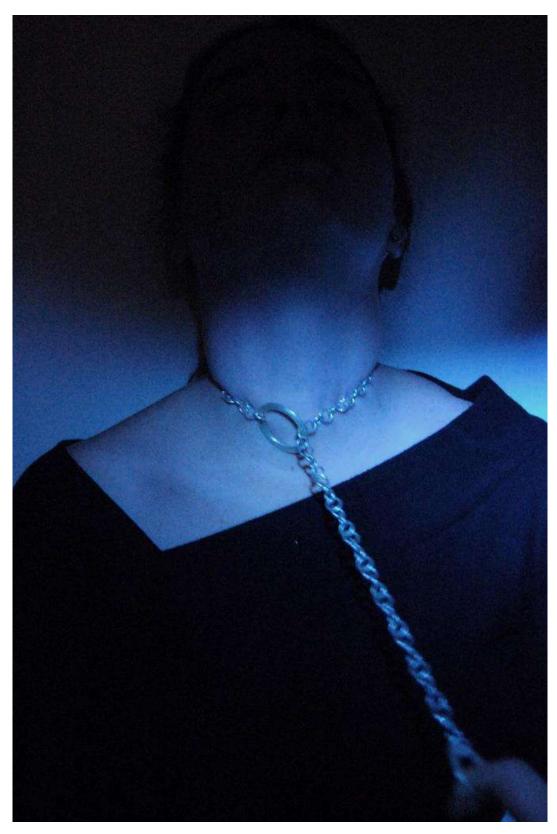
For research and for my final show, photography has been very important. It is a clear way to show the jewellery in its context. I played around with lighting, colours and editing to make the photos appear relevant to different surroundings for example the 'vanilla' photos being more normal and the BDSM photos being more sexual or seem darker.

Choke collar



'Vanilla' photo of Choke Chain Necklace for Propositions

For a first photo I quite like how it came out, the colours are relatively normal but the shadows across the face suggest that something else is going on in the photo. The black top makes the necklace stand out so it is obvious what the purpose of the photo is. The photo is not in focus and this is a big problem, but for a first attempt it is not too bad.



'Kinky' photo of Choke Chain Necklace for Propositions

This was the other photo I displayed for propositions. I quite like the colour as it is a big contrast to the 'vanilla' version. We used a light and a slow shutter speed to focus the light on the neck, it takes the attention away from the person wearing, this suggests anonymity that represents the way that people hide their kinks and fetishes.

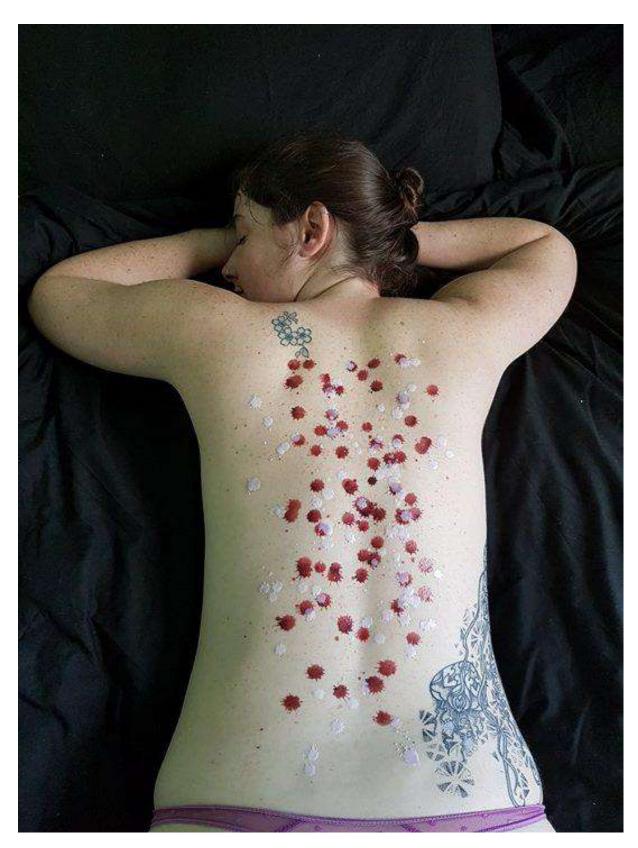
Wax photography



Candles being lit



Lit Candles

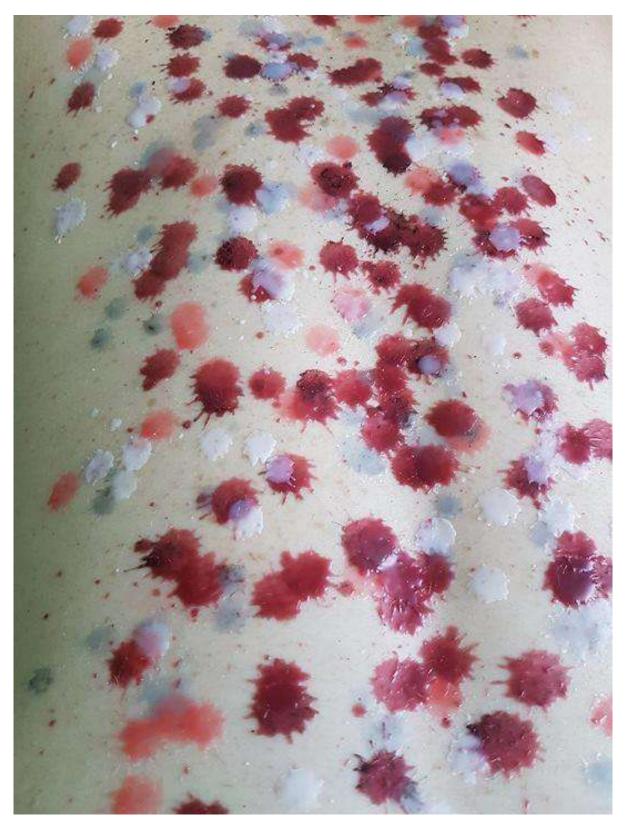


Wax on back



Close up of wax splatters

I really like the patterns the wax makes on skin. I was hoping to use this in some part of my project but it didn't seem relevant to use.



Close up of wax splatters

We dripped different coloured wax and overlapped the splatters which made more interesting patterns.

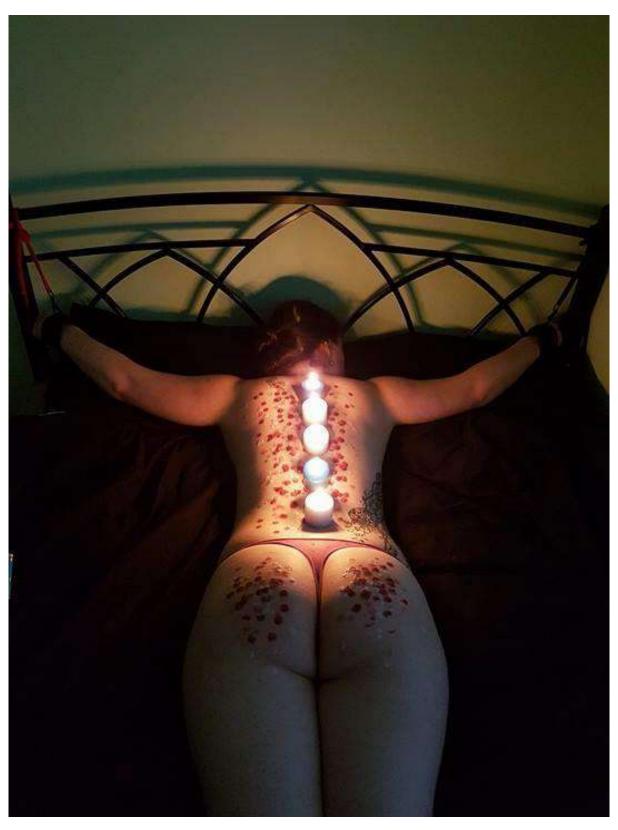


Wax splatters whilst stood against wall



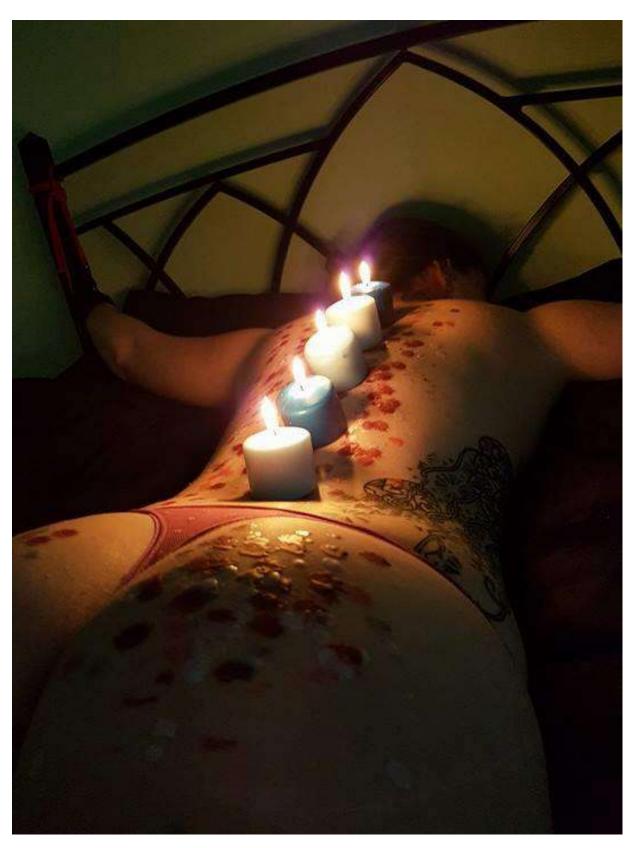
Wax splatters whilst stood against wall with candle lighting

I preferred the way the candle light cast shadows across the wall and the darker environment made the colours of the wax more noticeable. The slightly darker image also reflects BDSM in a more sinister way, rather than the light image just showing the wax.



Tied to bed frame with candles on back

I like the symmetry of this photo, the candles down the centre of the back highlight the wax and cast light on that area and shadows from the bedframe whilst letting the arms and face fade into darkness. This also suggests anonymity.



Candles on back



Candles in a row

I like that the candles show the curve of the back. I also like that the candles are resting on the back as if it were a table. This is another fetish, some people like to be used as furniture primarily for degradation as if they are saying "You are no better than an inanimate object."

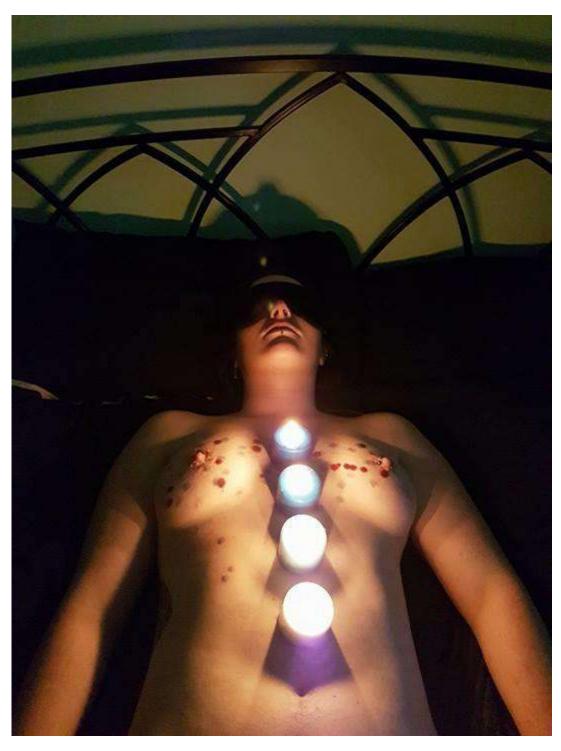


Candles on chest



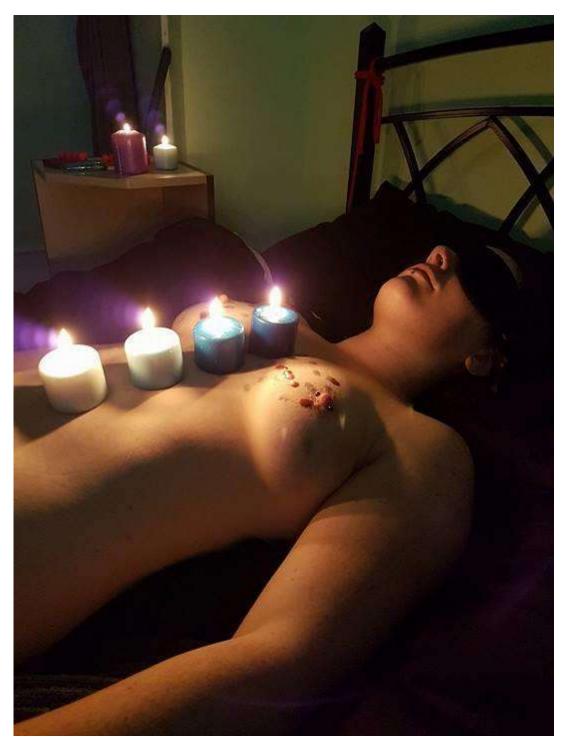
Candles on chest

I really like the way the candles cast shadow on different parts of the body highlighting certain areas. I also like that the candles cast shadows on themselves which form geometric style shadows.



Candles on chest

The shadows of the candles in this image creates new patterns that I would not have thought would appear in these photos. I was hoping to use some of these to influence my design but they did not seem relevant.



Candles on chest and in background

The candles in the background of this image is a comparison of the candles being on a table and the body. It portrays the degradation of using a person as a table and the candles on the chest shows how still someone would have to be to keep the candles from falling.

Overall, I am happy with the outcome of these photos but I had hoped they would be more relevant to the research of my project. They are helpful to the portrayal of BDSM through photography but they have not helped my design process which I had hoped they would.

Final Photographs



Vanilla Choke Chain Necklace





Kinky Choke Chain Necklace



Vanilla Slave Bangles



Kinky Slave Bangles



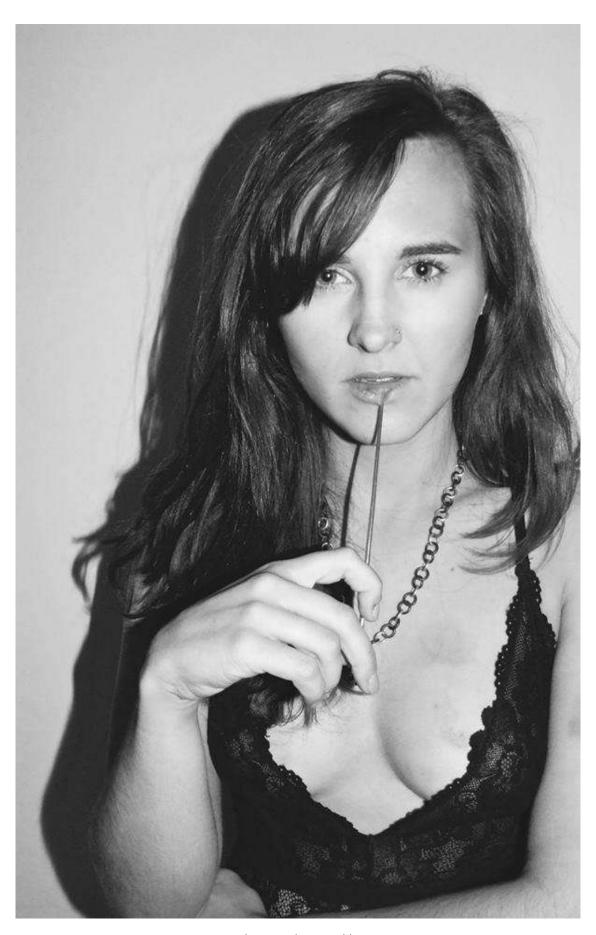
Vanilla Cigarette Ring



Kinky Cigarette Ring



Vanilla Sounding Necklace



Kinky Sounding Necklace



Kinky Sounding Necklace



Vanilla Slave Bell Earrings



Kinky Slave Bell Earrings



Vanilla Hair Chain



Kinky Hair Chain



Kinky Hair Chain

Critical Analysis of overall project

I have made 6 pieces of jewellery each to represent a different fetish or act in a subtle way. I used photography to display these pieces of jewellery showing them both in their more acceptable purpose and their kinky purpose.

I would like to take this project further. There are so many popular fetishes and kinks that I would like to research and make jewellery for in the future. I would also like to make a simpler and more affordable range of my jewellery to hopefully sell in shops and online.