The BDSM Emblem Project

Prepared for you by

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The BDSM symbol incorporated in the CEPE logo was created by a very private individual known as Quagmyr, in 1994. Here is Quagmyr's description of the Emblem and its use:

"The Emblem Project was initially created (long before it had any sort of name) to come up with and produce a pin that could be worn by BDSMers to discretely identify themselves to each other even in a potentially hostile vanilla environment. The BDSM emblem has no "obvious" symbolism because it was created to be enigmatic. To the vanilla observer who would be put off by BDSM, it is merely an attractive piece of jewelry. Thus, we can wear it freely as a friendly salute, nod, and wink to other BDSMers we should happen to pass on the sidewalks and in the hallways of our daily lives.

"To the insider, however, the Emblem is full of meaning. The three divisions represent the various threesomes of BDSM. First of all, the three divisions of BDSM itself: B&D, D&S, and S&M. Secondly, the three-way creed of BDSM behavior: Safe, Sane, and Consensual. Thirdly, the three divisions of our community: Tops, Bottoms, and Switches. It is this third symbolism that gives meaning to the holes in each unit. Since BDSM is at the very least a play style and at its greatest a love style, the holes represent the incompleteness of any individual within the BDSM context. However "together" and "whole" individuals may be, there remains a void within them that can only be filled by a complimentary other. BDSM cannot be done alone.

"The resemblance to a three-way variation on the Yin-Yang symbol is not accidental. As the curved outline of Yin and Yang represent the hazy border between where one ends and the other begins, so do the curved borders here represent the indistinct divisions between B&D, D&S, and S&M.

"The metal and metallic color of the symbol represents the chains or irons of BDSM servitude/ownership. The three inner fields are black, representing a celebration of the controlled dark side of BDSM sexuality.
The curved lines themselves can be seen as a stylized depiction of a lash as it swings, or even an arm in motion to deliver an erotic spanking. The all-embracing circle, of course, represents the overlying unity of it all and the oneness of a community that protects its own."

On the subject of the difference between the Emblem and the Leather Pride Flag, Quagmyr has this to add:

"Other than the fact that the two look very different and have different symbolic elements, the two symbols both mean almost the same thing. At base, they both mean "Hi There! I'm into BDSM!" The difference is that the Flag is an overt symbol while the Emblem is covert. The Flag is a shout and the Emblem a whisper. The Flag is for the out and proud to declare their interest to the world and the hell with anybody who doesn't approve. The Emblem is a quiet, secret, discrete identifier for those who feel they cannot or should not be out to the public about their BDSM interest."

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