

Polare Edition 52

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Editorial

by Katherine Cummings, Polare Editor

Half the year gone and what have we to show for it? Four issues of *Polare* (counting this one), most of an anti-violence report which has disappeared into committee, a wrecked leg for Phinn, an invitation to speak in Belgium for Elizabeth Anne and an updated and much improved web page thanks to the Social & Support Worker, who took the flickering torch from my faltering hand just in time ... Of course Paula and David and David and the other Elizabeth went on quietly performing miracles of housing, accounting, case management and administration respectively. Why am I writing as if the world is about to end? I don't know, frankly. I'm off to New Zealand at the end of next week but New Zealand is hardly Ultima Thule. No, I think it must be an after-effect of the rain, which caused my planned sailing weekend to be cancelled and my dogs to smell like wet dogs.

We have another talking point this issue. A contributor who wishes to remain anonymous gives us her views on the difficulty of obtaining work post-transition, and the attitude of the general public towards us when they discover that we were not always as we are. She also provides her advice on dealing with these matters. I hope you will write in with your opinions. By all means add your two cents worth (I'll send you a 2c piece as contributor's fee if I can find any). I think *Polare* talking points are a good way for people to discuss common problems without actually having to go to the lengths of getting together.

There is also to be a piece later in this issue on the lovely Julia Doulman, she of the Jack Russell named Muttley. Julia is the star of a film entitled "Becoming Julia", which will have its world premiere at the Sydney International Film Festival at 4:45pm on Thursday, 19th June.

The film has been made by documentary film-maker Ruth Cullen who advertised for a subject in *Polare*. "Becoming Julia" will also screen on S.B.S. later in the year. Our congratulations to both Ruth and Julia.

On a more controversial note, a book has recently appeared in the United States which is creating fury and schisms in the T* community. *The Man Who Would Be Queen* by Michael Bailey has been published by Joseph Henry Press, publisher for "National Academies, advisers to the nation on science, engineering and medicine".

So far I have only read second-hand opinions of the book, pro and con and would prefer not to come down too vehemently on either side until I have a chance to make my own judgement.

Both sides agree, however, that Bailey follows the Blanchard line pushing the view that transgendered people fall into two classes and two classes only, homosexual transgenders and autogynephiliacs, men who are erotically stimulated by thinking of themselves as women Both sides also agree that one of Bailey's set beliefs is that transgenders falsify their own memories to justify their belief in the virtually lifelong nature of their transgendered status.

Feature Articles



... she wants people to know that we are not glamorous super models and we are not freaks. We might be the man or woman next door ...

Julia in Control of Her Life!

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Words, Words, Words

As the understanding of transsex and all of the intersexes increases, we seem to paint quite a bewildering picture of ourselves and the biology of our being by attempting to cram too many meanings into words the that we use interchangeably.

On Acceptance and Employment

A reader describes their transition that had occurred about fifteen years prior, and it had been a tumultuous time, full of hope and despair. However they had survived and found a satisfying equilibrium in life because of an abiding ease with who they are.

An Interview with Jane Fonda on Gender

An exclusive interview with Jane Fonda, the famous mom of Troy Garity, star of the upcoming gender-defying film *Soldier's Girl*. This interview becomes a fascinating give-and-take on penis-privilege and how breaking down gender barriers could change the world.

The Hair Growth Cycle

Hair growth occurs continuously as new hair cells are formed at the base of the follicle and molded by a structure called the inner root sheath, that surrounds the growing hair shaft. Androgens, the male sex hormone activates specific areas of the body to produce hair.

To me it is sheer nonsense to maintain that there are only two kinds of transgenders. This denies the complexity of human differences in a foolishly simplistic manner. If the second is true I find it sheer impertinence for anyone to assert that I don't recognise the truth of my own memories.

Beyond these two comments I will wait until I have read the book before I feature it (and comments pro and con) in *Polare*.

Manager's Report

by Elizabeth Riley, Gender Centre Manager

Chris Puplick resigns as President of the N.S.W. Anti-Discrimination Board.

I feel compelled to begin this report by expressing my sorrow at Chris Puplick's resignation from the A.D.B. I have had cause to work with Chris on many occasions and my association with him dates back to before the transgender components of the legislation took effect in 1996. In all that time I have found his unwavering commitment to human rights and the eradication of discrimination in all its forms enormously inspiring.

Chris has been a great ally to our community, and indeed to all those communities that have faced discrimination. Despite his incredibly heavy workload, not just as President of the A.D.B., but in the many other agencies for which he has had responsibility, he has always made himself available to discuss issues and to play a key role in addressing them. His departure from the A.D.B. marks a sad day for our community and for all those communities that have benefited from his commitment and dedication. He is a man of great integrity and he leaves behind a pair of shoes that will be very hard to fill.

It has been my great pleasure to have had the opportunity to work with Chris over the years and I wish him all the best for the future.

The Neglected Communities Forum.

The recent "Neglected Communities" forum held at Parliament House, an event incidentally that was initiated by Chris Puplick, has proven the catalyst for significant developments in seeking appropriate law reform. A number of recommendations stemming from the various papers delivered at the forum have been compiled by the A.D.B. and a meeting of representatives from each of the groups involved has been scheduled for late May - early June to explore areas where there is disagreement.

Key areas under scrutiny involve the varied positions adopted by representatives from the transgender, transsexual and intersexed communities and much of the issue stems from the way these terms are defined. I am hopeful that we can find common ground so that the process of law reform is not impeded and that basic human rights regardless of definitions are not compromised.

In any event, the process of change is rarely a rapid one, so I expect there will be ample opportunity for voices to be heard so that progress achieves optimum outcomes. More on this in future reports.

Elizabeth Anne to attend H.B.I.G.D.A. Conference

I am pleased to be able to report that Elizabeth Anne, the Gender Centre counsellor, will be delivering a paper at the Harry Benjamin conference to be held in Belgium in September of this year. It has become increasingly apparent over recent years that Elizabeth is one of the few counsellors who can claim to be expert in providing effective and appropriate counselling to transgender people and their family members. Elizabeth will have a great opportunity to spread her wisdom at one of the key gender events on the world stage.

One area that Elizabeth will be concentrating on is the disparity between the traditional approach to counselling and the real nature of counselling as it applies to this community. She will no doubt challenge a few of the old traditional notions of some of the participants and hopefully leave them with a new perspective and some new approaches to take home with them. In any event I am sure the conference will be the richer for her participation and we look forward to hearing her report when she returns.

Anti-Transgender Violence Project.

Over recent months the Gender Centre, and in particular Katherine and to a lesser extent myself, have been involved in a research project funded by the N.S.W. Attorney General's Department to investigate strategies that may help to reduce the levels of violence experienced by the transgender community. The project has been a huge one and has explored violence across a broad range of categories in identifying the types of violence that can occur and strategies that can help to overcome them.

The original project, including the conducting of a trial to reduce violence, was to have concluded by the end of June. However, the complexity of the project, coupled with the general lack of prior research in the area, resulted in the project being extended. We hope to have a final published report soon and anticipate concluding the project in December of 2003.

The overall project has been guided by a Steering Committee with representatives from A.G.'s, N.S.W. Police, Department of Community Services, the Lesbian and Gay Anti-Violence Project, South Sydney and Marrickville Councils and the Gender Centre. A sub-committee including representatives from DoCS, N.S.W. Police, A.G.'s and the Gender Centre is working to finalise the report. The efforts and commitment of the Steering Committee in working towards a safer environment for our community is greatly appreciated.

We will keep you informed of our progress on this important project and of the possible contributions community members may be able to make.

Expert Advisory Group on Gender Difference, N.S.W. Health.

The Expert Advisory Group on Gender Difference is a new committee formed by N.S.W. Health to examine a range of health needs for people in the transgender community. The Gender Centre has been invited onto the committee to provide advice on the issues concerning our community. There are a number of key representatives from our community and from the medical fraternity and the policy development section of N.S.W. Health.

At the time of writing this report I have not yet attended a meeting. However, I am anticipating that we will be successful in achieving a number of significant gains over the course of the committee's term and I will provide details of these in future reports as they occur.

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Julia

In Control of Her Life

by Katherine Cummings

Article appeared in Polare magazine: June 2003 Last Update: October 2013 Last Reviewed: September 2015



Julia Doulman

Julia is not a big woman but she has amazing strength and a smile which could light up Central Station. She has suffered at the hands of her family, her employers and the bigoted public and she has come through it all with courage and style.

... she wants people to know that we are not glamorous super models and we are not freaks. We might be the man or woman next door ...

And now some of this has been recognised by a documentary film maker, who has spent the past two years making a film called *Becoming Julia*. The film will have its world premiere at the International Film Festival, screening at the State Theatre in June 2003. The maker of the film is Ruth Cullen, who has made other documentaries based on the lives of interesting people, notably Vali, a tightrope dancer and Painted Lady who was famous for her tattoos as well as her entertainment skills. Ruth's documentary recorded Vali's life twenty years ago.

And now she has turned her skills to recording the transition of Julia, from a man named Paul who was a farmer and a man among men, through the difficult times of transition as she sought to find her new image, the image which had always been in her mind, but had

never had a form and a shape.

Make no mistake. The film is not about transsexualism ... it is about Julia, Julia the individual and much of the film is in interview format. Julia transitioned formally on 18th October 2001.

Her family have not been accepting and have shown no compassion. Julia's best friend and constant companion is not a relative, nor a lover, but her loving, intelligent Jack Russell named "Muttley". Julia rescued Muttley, who had been abandoned and turned up at Julia's doorstep like a friend in need when Julia's life was difficult and she needed unconditional love.

What does Julia do? She drives anything with wheels and at the moment that means buses. She lost her job driving for the State Transit Authority after abuse from members of the public caused her to retaliate in kind. But she has bounced back and now drives for a private bus company, racking up as much overtime as possible to give her a financial cushion for the "Big Day", whenever it may happen to come.

But back to the documentary. Much of it, as I said, is in interview format, but there are also records of shopping outings and a visit to an image consultant, sequences playing with Muttley and cooking.

Looking at Julia's photos is to see how multi-faceted a person she is. There are photos taken on her farm tractor, photos taken at the wheel of Ian Luff's racing saloon and there are photos of Julia in the street. There are also sexy photos of Julia in a mass of purple tulle, posed by a professional photographer.



Ruth Cullen with Julia Doulman

And what was Julia's motivation in allowing her private life to become public?

She says she wants people to know that we are not glamorous super models and we are not freaks. We might be the man or woman next door and we should be treated with the same compassion and courtesy as any person who starts life with a social handicap and rises above it, by asserting his or her right to respect and understanding.

Ruth Cullen Has Her Say

When I decided to make a film about a transsexual I contacted the Gender Centre and advertised in *Polare*. A number of people responded and I chose Julia. Over a two year period I followed Julia's progress from the person she used to be, a fellow named Paul, who seemed to me to epitomise the typical Australian male yet had no doubt she was a woman.

As a feminist I have always been interested in issues relating to gender. A sex change is probably the most profound identity crisis that one can go through and the ideal opportunity to really explore what makes us tick. My film is not a "fly on the wall" documentary, it is a process of active engagement between the filmmaker and her subject. It is real life but it is cast, selected, heightened, intensified and constructed real life.

I am interested in the fantastic facets of everyday existence. In these conformist times I believe it is even more important to open up people's humanity where differences and contradictions are not seen as obstacles but rather as things that enrich us all.


Becoming Julia

Directed by: Ruth Cullen

Starring: Julia Doulman

Producer: Ruth Cullen

Released: 2003

From Ruth Cullen's website  You can take the boy out of the girl, but a "rev head" lasts forever. Paul is single, straight and thirty-seven and nothing would suggest he is anything other than the regular, car loving "Aussie" he appears to be at first glance. Underneath it is a different story. Paul is transgendered, and although he still lives as a man and looks like a man, over the next twelve months he will undergo a gender change and live as Julia. Filmed by acclaimed film maker Ruth Cullen over a period of two years, *Becoming Julia* explores the deconstruction and recreation of a person. "Paul's initial appeal to me was that he seemed to epitomize the typical Australian bloke in so many ways yet he had no doubt that she was a woman. I was interested in the contrast between the butch male exterior and her inner feminine world and the point of transition where the man I knew became the woman he really was". - Ruth Cullen.

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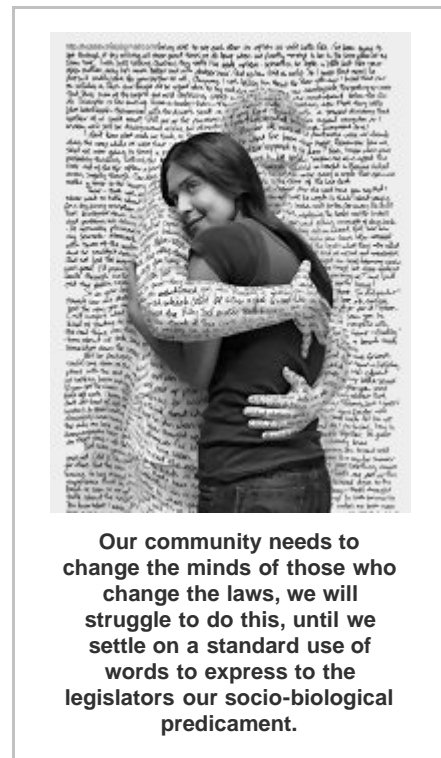
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Words, Words, Words

I'm so Sick of Words!

by Gina Dumas

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Our community needs to change the minds of those who change the laws, we will struggle to do this, until we settle on a standard use of words to express to the legislators our socio-biological predicament.

For several years I have considered the difficulties we have brought on ourselves as we attempt to educate a world slowly awakening to our realities. As the understanding of Transex and all the Intersexes increases, we seem to paint a bewildering picture of ourselves and the biology of our being, by attempting to cram too many meanings into words that we use interchangeably.

Much tension exists in our community over the ownership of words and the concepts associated with them. These tensions are products of the need we have to define ourselves to society ...

Perhaps it would be better to say we are attempting to stuff too many heads into too few hats. Let me illustrate this point.

If we take the descriptor "breathing difficulties" and claim that this term alone suffices to cover our understanding of this life threatening condition, then those that do not suffer from "breathing difficulties", will assume that they have a grasp of the problem, and that one cure fits all.

When we reflect on issues such as lung cancer, influenza, fractured ribs, the common cold, a broken nose etc., we see that they are all very different causes of the problem "breathing difficulties" and most certainly will not respond to the same treatment.

As a very misunderstood community, we do ourselves no favours when we attempt to use "a one blanket fits all" approach to our issues, it simply doesn't.

We most certainly have the common problem "that society doesn't understand the words that define us, and fails to respond to our very different needs". We have banded together around this problem, it is the only commonality we have.

It was very interesting to read the eighty-eight page judgement of Justice Chisholm in the case known as "Re: Kevin", and to see the evidence that the Family Court of Australia accepted both in this case, and the appeal before the full bench which also upheld the judgement based on the same evidence.

A key was turned in our favour, by the wonderful efforts of Ms. Rachael Wallbank (the solicitor running the case), the courage of Kevin and Jennifer, and those who testified with such telling effect. We would be fools to turn the key back again, by muddying the waters so recently made clear.

Transex is an intersex condition, done - sealed and delivered, into Australian law. Let us build on this fact.

From the time of Dr. Harry Benjamin and through the fifty years since, this had been posited by the most reputable minds in the field of treating the *transsexed*. It has now been accepted as fact. "Transex" is not C.A.H., neither is it A.I.S., nor Klinefelter's or any of the other intersexes, but neither are they each other. You will notice that I drop the "uality" of the descriptor, when I write of the "transsexed", for the word "transsexuality" screams the wrong message to those we need to educate. Words can do that.

Words are probably our biggest common headache, we desperately need to redesign the words we use to define ourselves. There is not a single word we use that was not coined by someone seeking to express a meaning, they are all inventions.

People can be utterly petrified by words that have been given taboo status by their having been pickled in fear, spiced with distortion, or seen in company with the wrong images. Bounce the word "Transsexuality" in front of a stranger and you will quickly see what I mean, they more often than not become intellectually constipated on the spot, you can see the fear dance in their eyes.

Interestingly, those of the otherwise intersexed in our community are often terrified of being associated with the words "transsexual" and "transsexuality". I don't really blame them; the words have become associated with very negative images. It will be easier to change the words than to change the images.

Some words imply quite correctly, that something has happened to the person with whom they are associated, something beyond their choosing. To be intersexed, is one such "word - person" relationship, even if the word is not understood in the wider community.

To be "transsexed" could be understood this way, for the word again implies quite correctly, that "transex", like the other intersexes, is not a choice. The biological realities of our lives cannot be laid aside, when they are not convenient on any given day.

Much tension exists in our community over the ownership of words and the concepts associated with them. These tensions are products of the need we have to define ourselves to society and the adoption of new or modified words will be one sensible and easy way to avoid stealing each others' thunder.

I urge the adoption of the "concept words" "transex" and "transsexed". Rachael Wallbank points out that the word "transgender" was coined by Virginia Price, an American transvestite. The word "transgender" is very much in the same boat. It is a "one-blanket-fits-all", that doesn't fit at all.

I do not say that the transvestite part of our community does not share the common problem about which we gather for mutual support, but the reality is, that just as the intersex conditions (there are around sixty of them) are not the same as one another, and don't all require the same treatment, neither can the word "transgender" serve the need we have to define the particular identity and needs of the "transsexed".

I join with those who urge the adoption of standard meanings for words such as gender, sex, gender roles, sexuality, etc. These are words that bring us to grief as a community, for we use them in confusion of their true meanings.

As a community we need to develop and use, simple, crisp, plain English meanings, that will make these terms more effective tools for us.

Perhaps the most glaring examples of our using words so as to confuse, is to be seen in the frequent use of the word "gender" when we mean "sex", and we speak of "gender reassignment" when what surgery aims to achieve is "sex reassignment".

"Gender" is a realisation of the sexed brain, we have yet to see a reassignment of the brain's sex.

Before the less flexible in our ranks put their Doc Martins through the Internet in rage, at my daring to assail the "Holy Grail" of "the concept of gender", may I suggest that we explore the difference between "Gender" and "Gender Roles", and the amenability of these realities to modification.

I agreed with our lovely editor, when she said at the bottom of page eighteen in edition forty-one of *Polare*, "neither genitalia nor chromosomes define gender. The brain is the arbiter and the brain usually follows the prompting of pre-natal hormonal influences". Neatly expressed Katherine, the court agrees with the evidence supporting this point of view.

Gender is therefore not amenable to modification.

And "Gender Roles"? Well, I have been using my own definition of these structures in all my recent correspondence and lobbying. "signalled to you by a person's "Sex", one assumes (sometimes incorrectly), that we know this person's "gender", and that they will live in a pattern or role, that each culture sees as normal for that sex."

As "gender roles" differ between cultures, we are able to see that "gender roles" are, at least in part, constructed by the culture in which they exist. "Gender roles" are therefore amenable to modification. Should "gender roles" be redefined as "sex roles"? I think so. It is our "gender" which drives us towards identifying with a "sex role".

Our community needs to change the minds of those who change the laws, we will struggle to do this, until we settle on a standard use of words to express to the legislators our socio-biological predicament.

A law is a fence, placed around a concept for the purposes of administration.

(I hope Ms. Wallbank will forgive me this definition ... it came to me in the middle of designing a concrete ramp but it does the job.)

Our legislators cannot frame a law on ethereal concepts such as "how long is a puff of smoke" or "what shape will a cloud be in ten minutes" they need certainty. Certainty that the concept at the centre of a proposed change is defensible in the public eye. They will always seek confirmation of any facts we put to them in support of law change. They have always sought this validation from the professional bodies of law and medicine. This will not change, risk-taking is not their business.

We as a community have the task of presenting defensible concepts to the legislators based on the facts we are best able to support, expressed in words that always have unambiguous meanings.

I propose that we need at least a national consensus on the words we use in our submissions, and in arriving at this consensus, the last thing we should have in mind is any attempt to make one blanket fit all, or we will have "trouble with words"

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On Acceptance and Employment

Experiencing the Advances and the Setbacks

by Unknown Author

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I show such joy in dancing.

I was touched by the relevance and the intensity of Elizabeth Riley's Report on The Transgender Dead, in *Polare* #51. There have been advances and setbacks, and I have experienced both in my life. I want to talk about two here, the enduring attitude of people to transgender people, and the employment situation.

On Being Accepted.

My male-to-female transition occurred about fifteen years ago, and it has been a tumultuous time, full of hope and despair. I have survived it, and have found a

satisfying equilibrium in life. Because of an abiding ease with who I am, I am not often "read" by people, and so my life has settled into a more or less normal pattern. I am quite plain looking, and not young, and in the times when I have been "read", the results have always been unfortunate.

The reaction of others has fallen into two categories. There are the people who loathe and detest us, and who are quite open about it; they are the ones who have given us the most trouble, and would have been responsible for the catastrophes faced by the unfortunates described in Elizabeth's Report. And there are those who appear to accept us as the human beings we are. The operational word here, is "appear". In fifteen years of living as a woman I have only met one person who has accepted me as human, without reservations - and he is my therapist! Others have appeared to be accepting, but in the end have only been tolerant. There is a big difference.

A person who accepts you accepts you warts and all, and will try to respect you for who you are. One who tolerates you will grant you living space on this earth as long as you conform to their own values. I don't think that I have met anyone (except as mentioned) who is willing to do that. Sooner or later they will judge you and find you wanting (unless you are young and pretty).

An example:

I'll give you an example of this, one of many. Recently I took an old friend to a dance, a dance where I have had a lot of fun, and no problems at all, probably because I show such joy in dancing. I have known this friend for many years, and have found her remarkably at ease with my gender dichotomy, and in general a very confident, self-assured person. In this case, however, she was acutely uncomfortable, although she is a good dancer. I couldn't figure out why, until she revealed that she was feeling upset because of me. Astonished, I asked why. She wouldn't say, but she slunk in her chair looking miserable, so of course no one asked her to dance. I stood up and looked interested, so of course I was asked to dance. When that piece was finished I asked the man to ask my friend for the next one, "because she is shy". This he did, and afterwards she told me that she felt awful because his partner was shooting poisonous looks at her. I muttered that I never perceived any such thing. She replied that that was because of my "unique situation". Amazed, I said, "You mean that they resent you because you are a genuine woman, and I am not?" Miserably, she muttered, "yes". I was completely at a loss to say anything, because my experience has been exactly the opposite - not to mention the fact that this man had been dancing with a variety of women that evening.

So, even this apparently accepting, self-assured person had been deluding herself (and me), and had secretly been holding herself as being superior because she was a "real woman". I have had many such experiences, most of them less subtle. If I have found a friend who appears to accept me, and then she finds out the "awful truth", her attitude changes subtly but definitely, and a distance appears between us. In several cases, it has been the end of the friendship.

If ever anyone accuses you of sexual treachery, never deny being a transsexual, but be prepared to justify it reasonably, "I was born this way, but by the way, I'm human too."

My best friends have never read me. Once a person does not read you, you can even ease their awareness of your obviously different appearance. "Oh, I can't wear my hair short, because I have such a broad face." Or, "I don't wear nail varnish because I have such big hands." Or, "It's hard for me to find nice-looking shoes because of my ample feet". You then graduate from being an odd looking

woman, to being an ordinary one with a broad face, big hands and large feet. Of course this must be done with a keen sensitivity to appropriate timing.

Beyond that, I have come to accept the fact that ordinary human beings simply cannot handle full acceptance of a transsexual as a fully human being. I'd like to hear of any contrary evidence from readers of this publication.

On Finding Employment.

And then there is the matter of employment, paid or otherwise. I agree absolutely with Elizabeth that employment is a "critical factor", necessary to escape from despair, and to maintain/acquire self-confidence, self-esteem and a feeling that we are fully human. Not to mention that employment is usually a prerequisite for a reasonable standard of living. Depending on anti-discrimination legislation won't help you at all. If you do, they'll only find some other excuse for not employing you; lots of excuses are possible. You need to do it another way.

Elizabeth said, "There is no rationale that can justify the relegating of the transgender community to a life that is sub-standard", economically and for social justice. But rational or not, that is what happens, particularly if you are not young and attractive. I have a suggestion for those of us who do not fall in that fortunate group: self-employment. If you can afford to set up a shop, well and good, but most of us cannot. Well, then, take out a business license, get an Australian Business Number and register with the relevant administrative body to cover what you want to do. There is a wide range of possible services that can be offered, and you can offer yours on your own terms.

For that you will probably also need specific training. Well, get trained. You can achieve this at technical colleges, secretarial colleges or even at universities. Yes, this can require some money, but it is worth it, even if you have to sacrifice everything else. You will find it, or borrow it. But don't steal it, or you will ruin everything.

If you are particularly fortunate you may be able to use your pre-transition skills, but this is often difficult.

When you have acquired the necessary skills, the next thing to get is experience. The best way to do this is to be a volunteer in your field of choice. Yes, you need to live while doing the volunteer work, but if you are drawing unemployment stipends you can explain truthfully that you cannot find a job until you have experience. If the authorities insist that you look for paid employment anyhow you can do that too.

You need only place modest advertisements in local papers or journals, and wait for the telephone to ring, A mobile phone is essential. Keep all receipts, to show the sceptical authorities, if necessary. If the authorities insist that you apply for jobs anyhow, do so as required, have interviews as relevant, but continue to get your practical experience. If you should actually be offered a job, by all means take it, but I must warn that it is not likely.

It is much better to get your experience before launching out on your own. "Oh, but who is going to hire a transsexual?" I don't know, but someone will, probably because they have not read you; be meticulous in learning the appearance and mannerisms of your gender. Yes, you may receive plenty of knock-backs. So what; keep trying, and trying and trying! If you persist you will succeed, one day. I guarantee it.

When you have taken out a Business License, making your home the base for your work, you can make all kinds of useful deductions for tax-exemption, including a relevant portion of your rent, your insurance, your transportation, etc. See a tax accountant to find out how to do this. Always declare all of your income, even if you are paid cash. This is really important.

My example:

I will tell you of my own experience. I can honestly say that if I can do it, anyone can! Because ... I chose to take care of children. A transsexual taking care of children? Unbelievable! Yes, but true.

This was my passion in life (although it was completely different from what I did before transition), so I decided to try to give it a go. The worst that could happen would be that I would fail, but I might even succeed; that thought was enough to give me courage. And I needed it.

After getting some experience in child care centres (and after having been rejected by quite a lot of them!), I undertook training in a technical college. That was an experience.

I gained entry to the course despite it's being hard to enrol in, probably because the college was bending over backwards to be open-minded. The young girl students in the classes read me, of course, and cordially despised me, showing no reluctance in showing it. But I made some friends with the older women in the course. The teachers were very cordial and helpful, and I really appreciated that; sometimes they even chastised other students for being nasty to me. I was probably the only transsexual who had ever tried to be a child care worker, and they were impressed by my courage. I was assigned to a child care centre for Placement Experience, and that went well because of my deep love for the children.

In due course I graduated, and started placing advertisements for work. The first thing I learned was that a person who was not young and pretty had precious little chance of being employed by a child care centre, because of the intense competition - even if they do not read you. So, I went into business for myself. I got an official Business Name, and the rest, as mentioned above, plus a Police Check and First Aid Training. The Police Check gave me some worry, but it was okay. The authorities were evidently sympathetic, because although they specified my previous family name, they did not state my previous given name which would have given the whole show away.

After lots of interviews (and rejections) I finally found clients, and have been happily caring for children ever since. It has been a source of great joy for me, and although child care is not at all respected financially in this society, the income has been enough to keep me alive. Even house-keepers get paid more, but child care is more fun!

Now, what is interesting is that in the child care centres where I did some years of volunteer work (even while being employed privately), once I was working there, not once did any parent of the children ever object to my working with their children, even though it is not at all hard to read me if you look hard. Evidently my love and skill with the children were enough to show that it was alright. Isn't that something? I even obtained paid employment in some of the centres.

Now, all of my work is with private clients, and it goes well. If a transsexual can find work caring for children, she can find work anywhere!

Be encouraged.

From the Polare Editor

I feel, after the views expressed in the past about my expressing views, that I should hasten to point out that I am writing here as my private-self, without drawing on the ineffable power and glory of my editorial hat.

I am impelled to respond because I am in profound disagreement with the burden of this talking point, and therefore wish to talk about it. I think the writer (let us call her X) assumes that her subjective views and individual experiences form a paradigm for the whole transgender community ... and I disagree. My own experiences are equally individual and subjective, but they differ so radically from hers that it is worth pointing out that there is no one-size-fits all pattern to life.

In fifteen years of living as herself, X has only found one person who accepts her as a human, without reservations. I, on the other hand, have retained many of my friends from before transition (some going back to primary school days, several to secondary school, many from university and a myriad from the other highways and byways of my life's journey). Have some of them judged me and found me wanting? Doubtless, but this is part and parcel of real life, and it doesn't stop them from remaining my friends despite what they see as faults, any more than my perception of their quirks would necessarily impel me to cross them off my life's dance card.

Talking of dances, X talks about her chagrin at finding out at a dance that a friend she thought she knew was really shallow and antipathetic. Well, hey, I've been disappointed in some people I thought were my friends and who revealed that they were uncomfortable with me, but some of them came around when they found out how much of the John they had been fond of was still present in Katherine and some I discarded as being too flawed to bother with. But the vast majority of my friends are still my friends, and I make new friends easily, and almost daily. I do not restrict myself to transgender society but go where I will and enjoy social occasions (such as trivia nights) and heartier pursuits such as sailing and crocodile wrestling (I made that last one up).

And no, I'm not young and pretty. I was fifty-two when I transitioned and I'm sixty-eight now. When I first transitioned I think I looked okay for a fifty-two-year-old, but I'm sure my social and employment successes did not depend on my drop-dead gorgeous appearance then and certainly do not now.

On the employment front, I did not have the option of starting a new life when I transitioned, nor would I have wanted to. I had a mortgage and a family to support, even if I had to do it from a distance, and therefore needed to maintain my income level by transitioning openly at my place of employment.

It might have been difficult for my employers to fire me from that position, although the N.S.W. Anti-Discrimination Act did not cover transgender at that time, but I have changed jobs several times since then (most recently two years ago) and even leaving aside the special case of employment by the Gender Centre, which might have found it hard to discriminate on gender grounds, I have been given responsible senior positions in a number of institutions and agencies. It is only fair to say that I have also failed to gain some of the positions I have sought, but I do not attribute that to my transgender status ... I suspect the stumbling block is more likely to have been my age or the presence of a better candidate.

X says "My best friends have never read me". As I have pointed out, many of my best friends have known me both as John and as Katherine but I have other friends who may or may not know, or guess, my past and I really don't care. Having written my autobiography and been interviewed many times on television and radio; and having stood for Federal Parliament as an openly transgender candidate for the Democrats (if its good enough for Georgina Beyer ...), I think it would be captious of me to complain if anyone made mention of my former life and my predecessor person.

I agree with X about gaining new and different qualifications, but I think everyone, not just transgender people, should be constantly upgrading their minds until their cerebral cortices are stuffed to capacity. In one of my periods between contract jobs I took a T.A.F.E. course in desktop publishing and just look where that has taken me! To the editorship of the leading transgender magazine in the Southern Hemisphere. Or at least in Petersham.

X says "who is going to hire a transsexual?". Well, X, people do, and it's not only because they don't read the transsexual (or transgender) in question. I have never bothered to hide my past, even if I have had my degrees, diplomas and professional memberships transcribed in my preferred name. The people who are

going to hire a transsexual are those who think the transsexual can do a job better than the other candidates. It is, therefore, up to the transgender people (or transsexuals) to make sure their C.V.s and references are well presented, that they are prepared for interview, that they are confident and friendly, mature and articulate, and above all, that they believe in their ability to do the job and their right to be judged on equal terms with other candidates. I do not lose sight of the fact that some jobs may be harder for a transgender to gain than others. X's ambition to look after small children must have been one of the hardest choices possible. More praise to her in achieving her ambition!

I should add that I have many mature-age transgender friends who have achieved success in their careers after transition, some in stealth mode and some openly. It is often the late-blooming transgender with the advantage of life experience (and qualifications and training) who has the strength to overcome the obstacle of unemployment as he or she has overcome so many other obstacles.

So there you have it. X's view that life is hard for the transgender in terms of acceptance and finding employment and my view that social acceptance is becoming easier to achieve and that the barriers to employment are not as rigid as they might once have been.

Both views are based on personal experience and are equally valid. There are probably many other variations in the mix, but any advice you get can only be a guide, a hint, a friendly hand on a darkened path. Your life is yours to live and much of it you will fashion through your own personality, experience and, let's face it, good fortune. Some of us are blessed with accommodating employers, loving families and lateral-thinking friends. Others are not so fortunate.

Bonne chance!

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An Interview with Jane Fonda on Gender

Mother of Troy Garity, star of the award-winning gender-defying film *A Soldier's Girl*

by Michael Rowe, The Advocate, U.S.A.

Article appeared in Polare magazine: June 2003 Last Update: October 2013 Last Reviewed: September 2015



Jane Fonda.

An exclusive interview with the famous mom of Troy Garity - star of the upcoming gender-defying film *A Soldier's Girl* - becomes a fascinating give-and-take on 'penis privilege' and how breaking down gender barriers could change the world.

Transsexual women have given up 'penis privilege' This is profoundly threatening to people on so many different levels.

In the Showtime original film *A Soldier's Girl*, actor Troy Garity plays Barry Winchell, the doomed Army private whose love affair with transgendered nightclub entertainer Calpernia Addams led to his brutal murder in July 1999 at the hands of a fellow soldier at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, U.S.A. In the course of writing this issue's cover story on *Soldier's Girl*, journalist Michael Rowe had occasion to speak with Garity's mother, actress Jane Fonda. Although she rarely grants interviews, Fonda agreed to an exclusive one-on-one with *The Advocate* to discuss her son, the political family in which he was raised, and the elusive notion of gender - particularly as it applies to patriarchy, homophobia, and the violence that led to Barry Winchell's murder.

The Advocate: You saw *A Soldier's Girl* at the Sundance Film Festival screening this past winter. It stars your son, Troy Garity, playing murdered soldier Barry Winchell. What was your impression of the film?

Jane Fonda: I'm really proud of it. I think it's very powerful, and I think every performance in it is outstanding. It raises many issues. One of the issues - the army's 'don't ask, don't tell' policy is raised by the film, but it has also been raised by Barry Winchell's parents, specifically his mother, Pat Kutteles, who was there at the screening. She is extremely brave.

The Advocate: Have you talked to her?

Jane Fonda: Yes, I have. I was in Kansas City with Barry's parents last month. As you know, the family have been very sharp critics of the army's 'don't ask, don't tell' policy and in fact hold it primarily responsible for creating the climate of frustrated rage and intolerance that led to their son's murder.

'Don't ask, don't tell' is a sham and needs to be revamped or looked at again. Something needs to be done. There was a marine in the audience at Sundance who stood up. He introduced himself as a U.S. marine, and I thought, Uh-oh. What's he going to do? He said, "Thank you for this film. We need to look at this issue in the military, and the film is a great way to open it up."

The Advocate: Did you meet also Calpernia Addams at the screening?

Jane Fonda: I had the pleasure of sitting next to Calpernia for the rest of the evening, and at the party afterwards. She was on one side of me, and her roommate, Andrea, was on the other. Andrea is also a transsexual. I see her as a theoretician of the transgender movement. She views what transsexuals do as smashing patriarchy.

The Advocate: What is it, do you suppose, about transsexual women that causes such a wide divergence of opinion among the general populace? The pendulum seems to swing from adoration to the purest loathing, in some quarters.

Jane Fonda: Transsexual women have given up 'penis privilege'. This is profoundly threatening to people on so many different levels. I suddenly saw how hard it is, and how vulnerable they are. I've since put them in touch with Eve Ensler, who is interviewing them to develop a monologue to add to her one woman show, *The Vagina Monologues* that will speak to these women who have given up the 'penis privilege' voluntarily. We hope to do an all-transgendered *Vagina Monologues* in Los Angeles next February.

The Advocate: Troy made some very interesting points during our interview yesterday

Jane Fonda: I'm not surprised! [Laughs]

The Advocate: I asked him what it was like to be raised in a family with a tradition of social awareness and social conscience, and how that shaped him as an actor and as a man. He indicated that it helped shape his view. Did you raise Troy in any conscious way that might have shaped his later political views? And I mean political in the largest human sense. For instance, was Troy raised with strong feminist sensibilities?

Jane Fonda: Yes, although I have to fess up that I'm late coming to all this. He saw it because I was always strong and independent, but I didn't have a strong feminist consciousness when he was growing up. I didn't understand these things, not really.

The Advocate: Do you think that was a generational thing? There is a whole generation of strong working women who didn't know at the time that they were living the feminist ideal. Do you think you were part of that?

Jane Fonda: Yes, I do. I think that's absolutely true.

The Advocate: In our interview, Troy was a ferociously articulate and quite passionate critic of the current war in Iraq, and indeed the impulse behind the military imperialism that is so much a part of modern warfare generally. Is his anti-war, pro-peace stance something that might have originated with you and his father, Tom Hayden?

Jane Fonda: We never proselytized. Our politics certainly took us away a lot, and he could have gone in the opposite direction out of rebellion, but he has his feet squarely on the ground. I learn from him all the time. All the time.

The Advocate: What struck me the most, especially coming from a man, is his view that in these violent times, what the world needs is to become more 'feminine' and less 'masculine'. What are your own thoughts on gender in the context of social constructs, particularly violence?

Jane Fonda: I'm sixty-five years-old, and it's taken me a long time, but I've come to see gender as the core, central issue facing humanity. It informs everything. If you deal with this issue, which is older than agriculture, it'll be the last bastion. And if we don't deal with it, we're not going to survive as a species. Because from that issue of gender emanates violence, hierarchy, homophobia - all of the social ills we deal with. We call them many names, but they come back to this one notion: that men are above women. Anything that challenges that notion is scary. You can trace any issue back to hierarchy, patriarchy, and power.

The Advocate: Michael Moore certainly addressed American culturally ingrained violence with stunning prescience in *Bowling for Columbine*.

Jane Fonda: I sat next to Michael Moore the other night, and he said, "I watched *Columbine* for the umpteenth time, and it suddenly hit me. I'd left out the gender issue!" I said, "Hello! That's why I wanted to sit next to you tonight." [Laughs] But my theory is, you can't put everything into one film. There should be a whole other film about it. But he said, "Hey, guys - the violence? It's male." Suicides are women and gays, violence is men.

The Advocate: But violence is so often subject to group sanction, meaning that if enough people - specifically men - are violent, it's thought of as a virtue rather than a vice. It's thought of as an example of male strength.

Jane Fonda: That's why I do a lot of work with Eve Ensler. And of course, Troy has become an honorary 'vagina warrior'. [Laughs] I'm sure he told you about that?

The Advocate: He told me that he'd just returned from an enlightening tour of Afghanistan with Eve. As North Americans, we so often forget that the true measure of the evolution of human culture needs to be taken in places other than the West. Have you noticed that happening elsewhere?

Jane Fonda: What I see happening is, and I hope it's not wishful thinking, a groundswell going on everywhere in the world that seems to be the opposite of patriarchy. I wish I had another word to use besides patriarchy, because it sounds so rhetorical. We'll just call it 'the vagina-friendly ethic' [Laughs]. It's rising. Whether it's at the critical mass yet, I don't know, but it's getting there. Eve Ensler is one of the people on the cutting edge of this. I've travelled with her to other countries. It is amazing what is happening, and it's not just women. It's women and what she calls 'vagina-friendly men'. With what's happening in the world today, these guys could be shooting themselves in the foot. If the structure that is waging the wars - and cutting back on the caring, giving institutions - collapses, we're going to be ready with a whole new paradigm.

The Advocate: It's interesting, isn't it, when you take away all the gender-based prohibitions, for instance, the way we act, the way we dress, the way we relate to one another, what's left is something extraordinarily personal and unique.

Jane Fonda: We just finished our 'G.C.A.P.P.' conference (Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention). We had a workshop called 'Faith and Sex', or something like that. There was a wonderful Baptist minister who talked about androgyny. He cited research that showed that the most resilient people in the world are androgynous. He had a graph that showed that 10 percent of people are totally homosexual, and 10 percent are totally heterosexual, and the other 80 percent are somewhere in the middle. And the healthiest people are right smack in the middle. The different degrees on the spectrum are fascinating, and the more it's accepted, the healthier the society is.

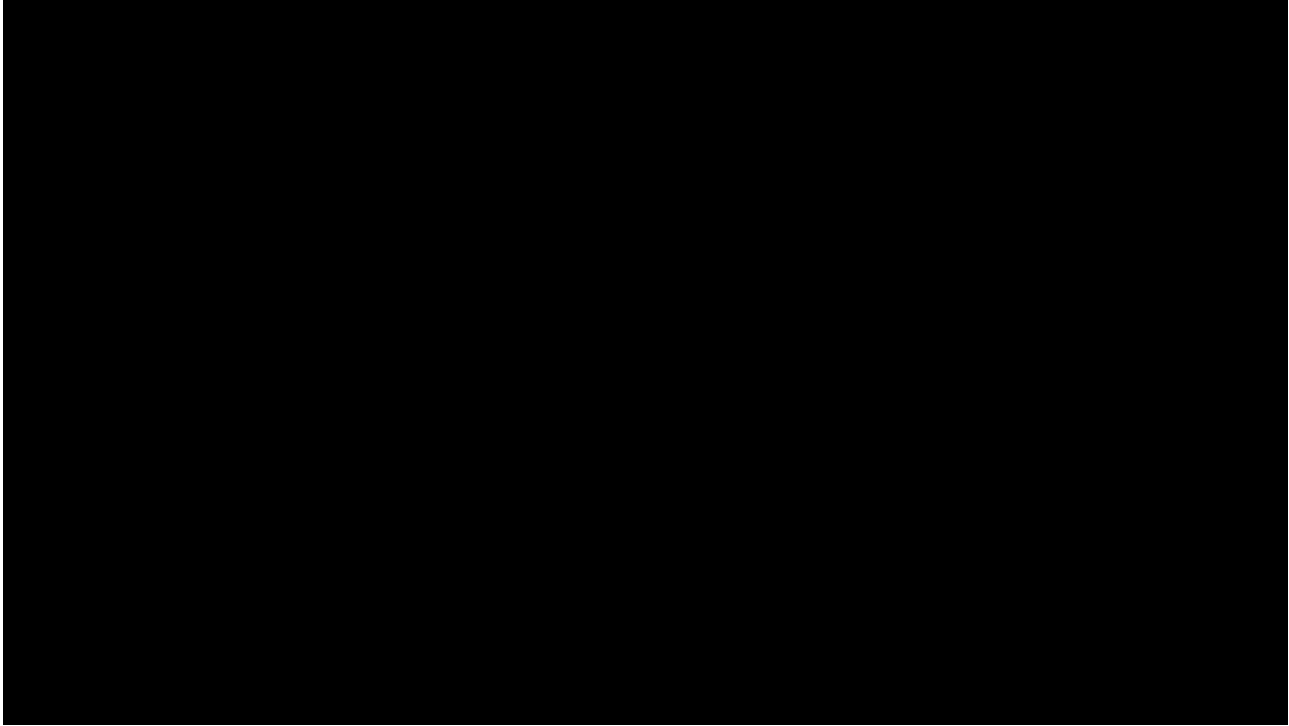
Soldier's Girl

Actors: Troy Garity, Lee Pace, Andre Braugher, Shawn Hatosy, Philip Eddolls
Director: Frank Pierson
Writer: Ron Nyswaner

Producers: Doro Bachrach, Lena Cordina, Linda Gottlieb, Ron Nyswaner
Released: 2003

The 2003 drama, *Soldier's Girl* is based on a true story: the relationship between Barry Winchell and Calpernia Addams and the events that led to Barry's murder by fellow soldiers.

Barry is a private with the 101st Airborne Division of the United States Army, stationed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. Calpernia works as a showgirl at a transgender revue in Nashville, Tennessee when the two met in 1999. Barry's roommate Justin Fisher (Shawn Hatosy) brings Barry to the club where she performs. When Barry and Calpernia begin seeing each other regularly, Fisher begins spreading rumours on base about their relationship, which appeared to be a violation of the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy about discussing the sexual orientation of military personnel. Barry faces increasing harassment and pressure, which explode into violence over Fourth of July weekend. While Calpernia performs in a pageant in Nashville, Barry is beaten to death in his sleep with a baseball bat by Calvin Glover, who had been goaded by Fisher into committing the crime. The film ends with a discussion of the aftermath.



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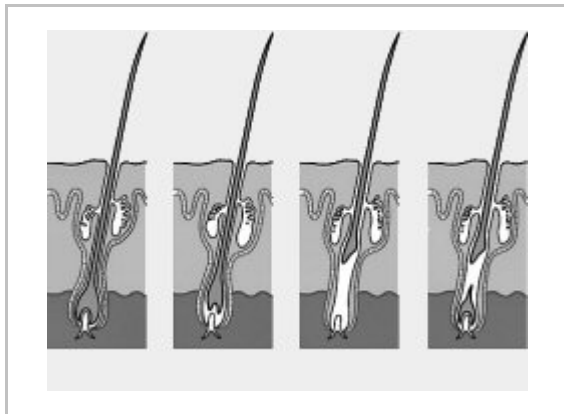
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The Hair Growth Cycle

Varying Greatly Between Individuals

from transgendercare.com

Article appeared in Polare magazine: June 2003 Last Update: October 2013 Last Reviewed: September 2015



Hair growth continuously occurs as new hair cells are formed at the base of the follicle and molded by a structure, called the inner root sheath, that surrounds the growing hair shaft. Androgens, the male sex hormone (present in both men and women) activates specific areas of the body to produce hair.

... it is understandable that clearing (the complete permanent removal of hair) of an area of unwanted hair such as the beard will take about one and a half to two years at best.

Hair growth varies greatly between individuals and the specific area of the body. Scalp hair, for example, grows an average at one-tenth of an inch weekly. Leg hair, by contrast, grows at about half that rate.

The life cycle of hair follicles, that is, the repeating cycle of growth and rest phases, affects overall hair production. No new hair follicles are produced after birth - the appearance (and disappearance) of hair is the result of changing ratios in the growth/rest cycle. This life cycle is distinguished as three separate stages:

- » **Anagen Phase** - the active growth stage
- » **Catagen Phase** - the transitional stage of arrested growth
- » **Telogen Phase** - the resting stage of the hair cycle

The cycle of life for each follicle begins with the anagen phase - the re-awakening of the follicle's growth stage where a newly formed hair begins to grow. This growth phase continues for a time lasting for as little as several weeks (like the moustache area) or lasting as long as several years (like the scalp area). Depending on the area of the body, gender, hormonal and other factors, growth lasts for varying lengths of time.

But ultimately the level of growth begins to slow. This second stage of slowing or arrested growth is known as the catagen phase. This slowing continues into the third and final phase - a period of inactivity or rest.

Finally during the third stage, the resting or telogen phase, the hair has separated from papilla and is no longer able to be provided with nourishment. At this point, no more new hair cells are formed and the inactive hair remains in place by a thin strand of epidermal cells. By the end of the telogen phase, the hair shaft is now only held in place mechanically, and can be shed by brushing, combing or other tension placed upon it. The hair shaft remaining in place at the end of its growth cycle is called a club hair. It is not uncommon for a club hair to remain in place while a newly formed anagen hair is beginning to emerge, forcing the club hair to be shed.

Whether the club hair is shed or not, the hair follicle will once again become active and begin to grow a new anagen hair. This process of growth and rest continues throughout our lifetime. In humans, follicle activity is generally scattered between all phases of the life cycle. Other mammals have a more orderly growth pattern, which shows as noticeable periods of hair growth and shedding.

This resting phase plays an important role in electrolysis: Generally, a follicle cannot be properly treated (and thereby destroyed) during the resting phase. Focusing on the beard area as it is of prime importance, almost half of its hairs are in the resting phase at any time. And depending on the area of the face, this resting phase may last anywhere from six to twelve weeks duration. So even if every hair could be permanently removed from the beard, from the very fine and slow growing to the thick and robust, only one half could be killed.

So it is understandable that clearing (the complete permanent removal of hair) of an area of unwanted hair such as the beard will take about one and a half to two years at best. This time frame is based on about 200 to 300 hours of treatment using a technique that kills about 70 percent of the hair follicles that are treated. Keep in mind that all electrolysis methods do not achieve this high kill rate. Thermolysis, may kill only 5 to 15 percent of hairs treated while the blend method may kill about 70 percent.

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