

# BUSH WACKED



**Bush or Brazilian?** It's a question as old as time itself. From the early masters of "manscaping" to modern creams and waxing, humans have been removing hair down there for millennia. Believe it or not, the ancient art of **pubic hair** removal dates back thousands of years.

words\_kathleen valent. photo\_daniella pinzon. design\_olivia ginsberg.

## A Brief History of Pubes

According to the Women's Museum of California, pubic hair removal can be dated back as far as 3000 B.C., when the Egyptians used copper razors to remove unwanted hair. Ladies in sixth century ancient Rome would use tweezers, pumice stones and even creams to tame their hair down there.

Hair regulates body temperature and protects the body from bacteria, so why remove it? According to "The History of Female Hair Removal," an article from the Women's Museum of California, the current era of hair removal may have been popularized by Charles Darwin's 1871 book "Descent of Man." It suggests that humans may be more sexually attracted to mates with less hair, making its removal a factor in the process of natural selection.

Until the late 1900s, going bare was all the rage. In 1914, Harper's Bazaar began publishing advertisements promoting hair removal products, sparking the hairless trend. Pubic hair removal was continuously encouraged by women's fashion, men's hair removal and the magazine industry, until the feminist movement of the 70s, which tied sexual liberation to freely grown body hair.

## The Trim on Today

In the early 2000s, waxing became increasingly popular after one infamous "Sex and the City" episode titled "Brazilian." But today, women may be going back to the 70s mindset of letting it grow. This is largely attributed to the modern feminist movement, which emphasizes the importance of a woman's choice, specifically women's bodies.

According to Professor Oueslati-Porter, senior lecturer and interim director of gender and sexuality studies at the University of Miami, women especially feel the need to adopt a certain "look." She said, "Women

▼ WHILE GETTING a Brazilian wax might be the most painful of hair removal options, you are guaranteed a hairless pubic area.

feel pressure to groom their pubic hair for more than just sexual partners; they are also pressured by our media culture, principally the pornography industry, to try to make their genital areas look like porn stars," which is unattainable.

One female freshman said that she "[feels] less feminine with pubic hair," and unfortunately, this is a dilemma that many young women face. "Women are targets of advertisers who make a great deal of money off [their] insecurities," said Oueslati-Porter. "Just take a walk in a local pharmacy, and you will notice virtually a whole aisle of products dedicated to getting women's bodies hairless."

## 'Canes Culture

According to a *Distraction* Instagram poll, nearly all students surveyed—34 out of 38 male-identifying students and 126 out of 130 female-identifying students—remove some or all of their pubic hair. Freshman Avery Tallman said he does both. "I prefer to have short hairs, so it's not entirely bushy, but not completely smooth either," he said. Sophomore Chris Nelson also said he likes to mix it up by shaving his legs but leaving some pubic hair up higher to avoid looking young. "Everyone grows pubic hair," Tallman said. "It's natural, so let's not pretend it doesn't exist."

When it comes to their sexual partner's pubic region, students agreed that they don't really care. "It's just really not something that I give much importance to," said freshman Aileen Flores. Tallman agreed. "Personally, I don't have a preference for people I'm really into," she said. "I'm alright with anything." Whether it's rocking the full bush or baring it all, it seems like anything goes and no one should feel obligated to conform.

## PRUNING

### Waxing

This method involves using hot wax to pull hair out. It lasts longer than other methods, but it's also painful.

Price: \$12-\$70

### Laser

Both the most expensive and longest-lasting way to go, laser treatments target and destroy hair follicles over the course of multiple sessions.

Price: \$350-\$900

### Shaving

Shaving is cheap, can be done at home and is virtually painless. However, you may need to do it a lot because hair can grow back quickly.

Price: \$5-\$25

### Depilatory Creams

These creams contain chemicals that weaken the base of the hair. Although this method seems cheap and painless, many people have allergic reactions to the chemicals.

Price: \$5-\$20

► MALES AND females get to choose how they want to keep "down there" groomed, but society does have an effect on their decision.

