

Re: rm(1) bug, possibly serious

Source: <http://unix.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/FreeBSD/stable/2007-09/msg00148.html>

- *From:* Oliver Fromme <olli@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Tue, 25 Sep 2007 19:43:57 +0200 (CEST)
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Torfinn Ingolfson wrote:

Oliver Fromme wrote:

```
$ cd /tmp
$ mkdir -p foo/var
$ cd foo/bar
$ rm -rf ../
rm: ../: Invalid argument
$ rm -rf ../
$
```

Note that the command "rm -rf ../" was entered twice. The first time I got an error message (and exit code 1), the second time it apparently succeeded. The very same command.

What happens if you issue a 'pwd' command after each 'rm -rf ../'?
We want to see the output.

It's /tmp/foo/bar every time.

IMHO, the only way the second rm command *should* succeed, is if it invalidates the current working directory, thus releasing the last lock on the directory.

Quick testing here:
[...]
Ok, I think it is a bug.

Yes, I think so, too.

By the way, an additional confusion is that "." and "../" are handled differently. Specifying "." always leads to

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this message:

rm: "." and ".." may not be removed

and nothing is actually removed. It is confusing that adding a slash leads to a different error message and removal of the contents of the parent directory. Clearly a POLA violation.

Best regards
Oliver

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"Perl will consistently give you what you want,
unless what you want is consistency."

-- Larry Wall

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