



NTEU at NMMU

He's not a garden boy

Written by Cath Jenkin

That old adage of the pen being mightier than the sword is so often forgotten when we actually speak.

The notion of thinking before you blurt a word out into the world has been jarringly illustrated by the likes of Penny Sparrow and Matthew Theunissen, but I'm not here to rant about online stupidities.

He is not a boy

Instead, I'm here to get angry about certain white people's refusal to change their thought and speech - and I think you are probably angry too.

The terminology used to refer to people that's still sticking around far beyond the days where we had segregated beaches is pissing me off.

And I'm not just talking about disgusting words like the one that begins with a K, I'm talking about milder, but just as far-reaching terminology.

I see it in the instances where a 45-year old landscaper or gardener is called a "garden boy". I see it in the way that a grandmother who washes dishes in the office and caters for meetings is called a "tea girl".

She is not a girl

Calling people out on it is difficult, because if the person who is referred to through an insulting term takes objection to being referred to in an infantilised way, they might land up jeopardizing their job. It's fear that keeps these terms around and that's not okay.

Languages frames our world

Ferretting out this insulting language has to happen. When I call people out on this, I get told a bunch of excuses, from "it's a habit" to "it's the way things have always been done" to "she doesn't mind".

But that's the thing that most people don't take notice of, or choose to ignore: the way we speak frames the way we see the world. The words you use in your everyday conversation are the ones that shape your entire world, and then seep into your interpersonal relationships and your everyday interactions.

To NOT call people out when they use insulting terms (yes, they are insulting - would anyone call a CEO a boy? No, they would not) is also wrong, but I absolutely understand why someone would feel forced to accept it when their job could be in jeopardy if they were to.

It's not just a habit

The excuse of "it's just a habit" is really poor. It's so poor I don't even want to give it any attention, but I have to because it's the most common one that's rolled right out when people get called out for infantilising someone they happen to employ.

Language is a learnt skill, and one that parents pass on to their children. That's why you'll find enthusiastic parents being careful not to utter the F-word around their toddlers. In the same way, can we not eradicate these insulting terms from our national language?

Can we stop accepting them as terms for actual, real-life human beings, and view it as a method for eradicating the insidious nature of racism? Because that's what this is - racism - it is just (still and sadly) ever-so-blightly accepted as part and parcel of everyday language.

But if we know anything about language, we know it can change the world.

SOURCE: <http://www.women24.com/Wellness/BodyAndSpirit/he-is-not-a-garden-boy-20160622?isapp=true>

SUCCESS IS NO ACCIDENT.

It is hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrifice and most of all, love of what you are doing.
- Pele



You don't have to Answer messages in your WhatsApp work group: South African lawyer

South Africans are coming under increased pressure from work due to WhatsApp work groups - which require them to respond to and act on any messages sent by colleagues or superiors.

South Africa's Basic Conditions of Employment Act states that employees are entitled to rest periods, and bosses cannot force them to answer WhatsApp work group messages outside of their working hours.

According to a report in the Sunday Times, South Africans are coming under increased pressure from work due to WhatsApp work groups - which require them to respond to and act on any messages sent by colleagues or superiors.

The Sunday Times reported that a "general manager of a national firm" said his staff were issued warning letters if they failed to respond to a WhatsApp message or did not follow an instruction.

As the company provided the cellphone and data, it was a requirement - and was included in their employment contracts.

Illegal to demand 24/7 attention

Norton Rose Fulbright lawyer Joe Mothibi said it is illegal for a boss to demand around-the-clock attention from employees, though.

He said an employer "couldn't expect an employee to be available at their beck and call 24/7".

"You can't say I have to be on my WhatsApp answering instructions [during my rest]. I cannot be expected to take instructions outside my core hours unless of course there are emergencies," said Mothibi.

The report also quoted a Durban public relations practitioner, who was told that participation in her work's WhatsApp group was non-negotiable.

"It stresses me. I tried to mute it but I then have anxiety because I am afraid to miss a message," she said.

Other employees complained of waking up in the morning to hundreds of notifications from work groups.

SOURCE: <http://mybroadband.co.za/news/business/169703-you-dont-have-to-answer-messages-in-your-whatsapp-work-group-south-african-lawyer.html>

JACKIE KING'S FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

Saturday, 2 July 2016 at 12h30 from Father's House Church, 30 Paterson Rd, North End.

