

Confusion, Hypocrisy and a F*cking Good Read!

Written by Eva Sless, Writer of Stuff
Friday, 15 July 2011 14:38

I am confused. As you get to know me you'll find this is not a rare thing, lots of things confuse me. City parking signs and why people still continue to wear leggings as pants are good examples of these, but the confusion I am feeling today is different. It's a bit tummy twisting and odd and I can't quite pinpoint what it is that's making me feel it.

I guess the place to start is around 30 years ago. I was four and the best part of my day was when mum and I would have our "milk and a biscuit" and sit in the living room to watch Play School.

Ah, Play School. It was, and still is in my opinion, the best TV show for kids ever. Forget your weird, slightly nightmarish Night Gardens and your odd, orange-leggined Djs, Play School is where it's at. With their cardboard toilet tube people and their spotty kinds of days they educate, entertain and delight children and parents alike.

When I was little I had two heroes on Play School. One was the hilariously funny John Hamlin whose little asides to the parents and tendency to dress as Miss Polly had both my mother and I in stitches, and the other was Noni Hazlehurst. With her wonderful crinkly-eyed smile and her little head shrugs and winks she was like a second mum. The kind of mum who'd blow on a cut after putting Dettol on it and who would tuck you up warm and safe in bed with a story every night.

When I was a teenager I would watch it with my niece and love the fact that my childhood hero was still entertaining kids, and as a new mum in my late 20s I would watch Noni on the show with my mum and my daughter and marvel at how three generations of my family could come together and find wonder and delight in this same woman, over two decades on.

At this stage I was writing weekly for one of my favourite magazines, Australian People. With its tongue-in-cheek bogan-ness and its scantily clad models it really was one of the most fun and amusing publications to write for. It has no pretensions. It's all about boobs, bums and beer and hey, there's nothing wrong with that! We're adults, we're allowed to like boobs, bums, and beer. That's one of the perks of growing up! So imagine my dismay, my hurt and my disbelief when I picked up the paper one morning to read that Noni Hazlehurst, my childhood icon, the woman who taught me the words to Bananas in Pyjamas, was tut-tutting and wagging her finger at me and my colleagues accusing us of the most heinous crime of sexualising children.

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According to her the fact that these magazines can often be seen in the eyesight of children is inappropriate and they should be moved to the back corner of the shop with the restricted R rated magazines like Hustler and Playboy.

But hang on a moment I thought as I looked at the cover of the latest People magazine, how is THIS (People)



any worse than THIS (Cosmo)?

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