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Sensitivity readers edit James Bond and Roald Dahl books   –   2nd March 2023

Level 0

Book companies are worried that words in old books might upset people. They are editing the books. They edited "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" and the James Bond books. Companies are using "sensitivity readers" to check for language that might upset people. The language is from 50 years ago. It was okay then.

The James Bond books had racist and sexist words about black characters and women. The books now have a warning. This explains that the books have negative words because they are from the 1950s. One edited word is "fat". This changed to "enormous". The UK's prime minister said it was wrong to edit the books.

Level 1

More famous novels are being edited. Publishers are worried that words in older books might upset people, especially children. The authors Roald Dahl and Ian Fleming had their books edited. Dahl wrote "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory;" Fleming wrote the James Bond books. Publishers are using "sensitivity readers" to check for language that might upset minorities. A lot of the language they check was written 50 years ago. It was thought to be okay then.

Publishers edited language in the James Bond books about black characters and women. The language was racist and sexist. The books will now have a warning. This explains the books were written in the 1950s, so they used words that we cannot use today. One edit is the word "enormous" replacing "fat". Using the word "fat" for a person is now a negative term. The UK's prime minister and its future queen said it was wrong to edit the books.

Level 2

More and more famous novels are being edited. Publishers are worried about upsetting words in books. They think language in older books might upset people, especially children. Two authors have had their work edited this week - Roald Dahl and Ian Fleming. Dahl wrote books like "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory;" Fleming wrote the James Bond books. Publishers are using "sensitivity readers" to check books for language that might be offensive to minorities. A lot of the language they check was written more than 50 years ago. Back then, the language was thought to be okay.

Edits in the James Bond books are because of language about black characters and women. The sensitivity readers decided the language was racist and sexist. The books will now be published with a warning. This explains that the books were written in the 1950s and 60s, so they used words that might upset today's readers. People are angry that the books were edited. The UK's prime minister and its future queen said it was wrong to edit them. One example edit is the word "fat" being replaced by "enormous". Using the word "fat" for a person is now a negative term.

Level 3

An increasing number of famous books are being edited. Book publishers are worried about sexist and racist words in books. They are worried that language in older books might upset people today, especially children. Two authors that have had their work edited this week are Roald Dahl and Ian Fleming. Dahl is famous for books like "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory". Fleming wrote the James Bond books. Publishers are employing "sensitivity readers" to check books. A sensitivity reader looks for language that describes minorities in an "insensitive or offensive" way. A lot of the language they check belongs to another time. It was written 50 or more years ago. Back then, the language was thought to be okay.

The recent edits of the James Bond books are because of insensitive language about black characters and women. The sensitivity readers decided that the language used by James Bond, also known as 007, was racist and sexist. The 007 books will now be published with a warning. This explains that the books were written in the 1950s and 60s, so they contained "terms and attitudes" that might upset readers today. Many people in the UK are angry that Roald Dahl's books were censored. The UK's prime minister, the future UK queen and the author Salman Rushdie all said the edits were wrong. An example edit is the word "fat" being replaced by "enormous". The word "fat" is now a negative term for a person's body shape.

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