

Where do we draw the line between fiction and abuse?

Jeremy Malcolm
jeremy@c4osl.org

How a CSEAM text enabled abuse

- Millions around the world have been exposed to a text that depicts vile acts of sexual abuse
- The powerful communities in which this text is shared are rife with child sex abusers
- The abuse has been systematically covered up and perpetuated for generations

- The book I'm talking about is the Bible

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When a Text Becomes a "Trigger"

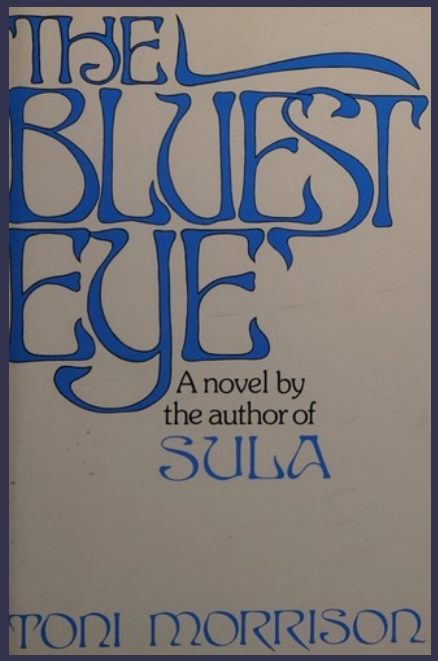
- Written depictions ≠ exploitation
- The relationship between text and harm is complex
- Unhealthy consumption does not make literature harmful or criminal
- Research can inadvertently enable presumptions of harm that fuel criminalization

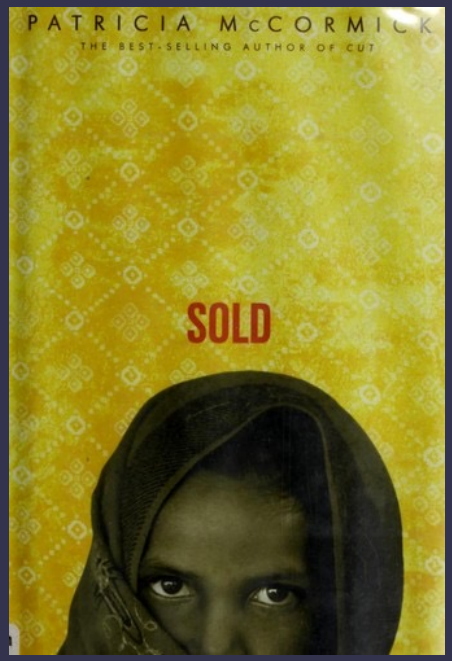
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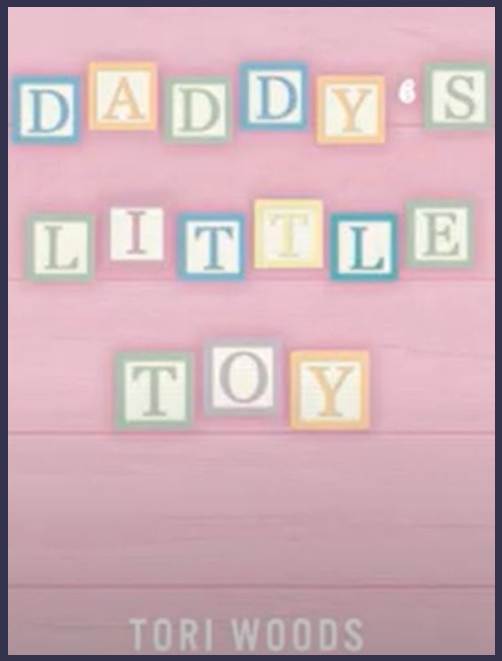
Pressure is building against FSM

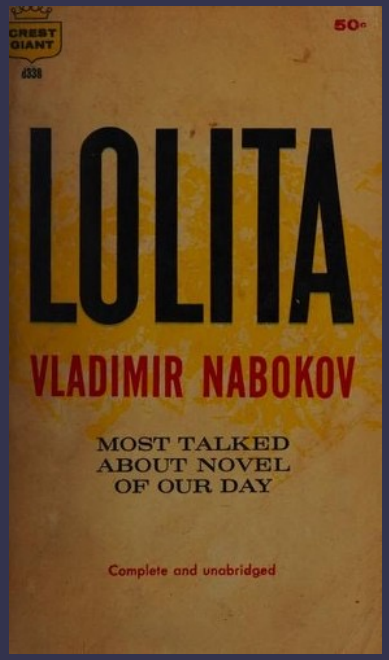
- UNICEF February 2026 declaration that AI representations should be treated as real
- German July 2026 Supreme Court doll ruling that private use of sex dolls can be criminal
- 2021 US archivist sentenced to 40 years over stories, twice as long as Ghislaine Maxwell
- 2020 Canadian Hansel & Gretel ruling elevating common sense over science

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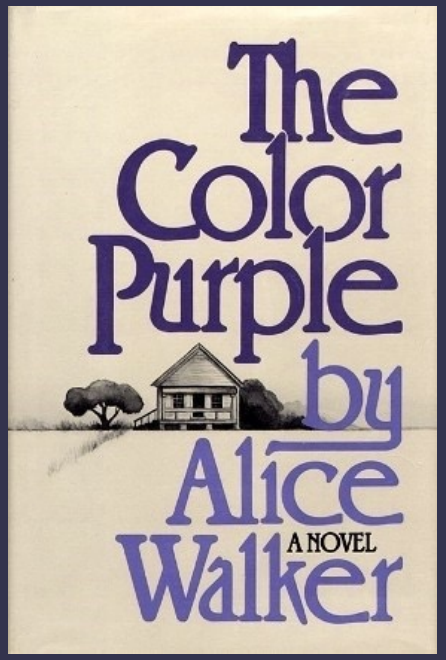












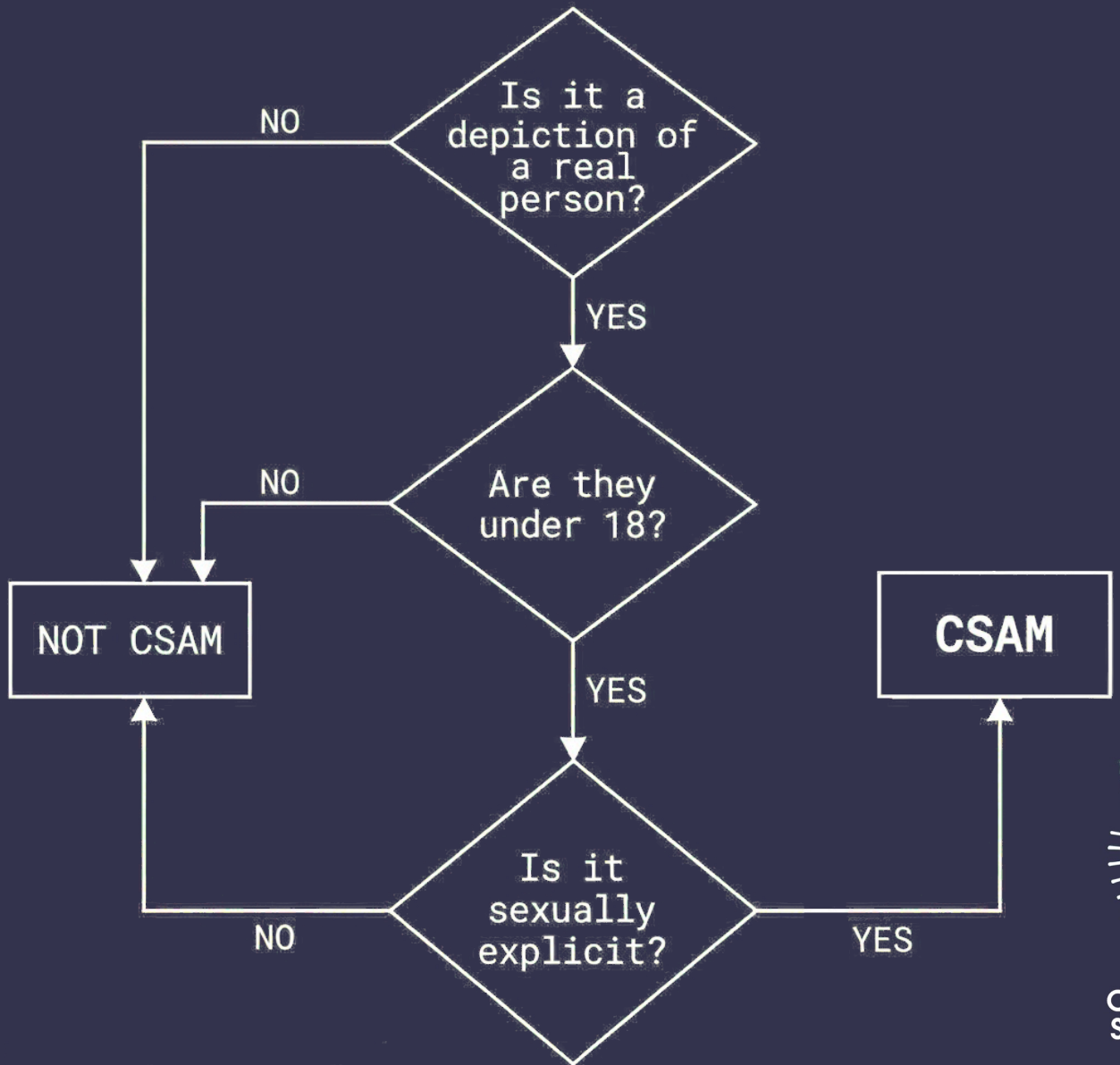
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Where do we draw the line?

- Fiction with a didactic purpose is OK, but for titillation or entertainment is not?
- Should whether a work is commercialized make a difference?
- Or should written fiction be OK, but drawn representations are not?



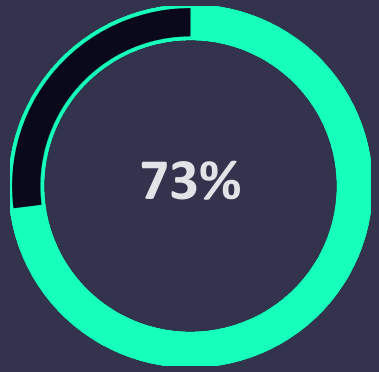
We draw the line at direct harm



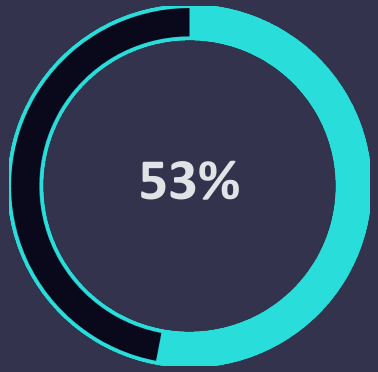
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Case study: United Kingdom

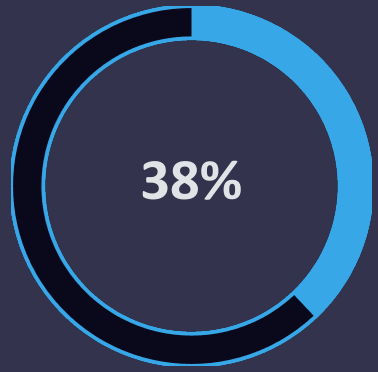
Law enforcement resources are being diverted…



Rise in FSM Prosecutions



Fall in CSAM Prosecutions



Resource Diversion

from child protection to moral regulation

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Protective or not dodges the issue

- FSM's effects on abuse are a smokescreen
- The push to criminalize FSM is not because of the abuse link but to punish immoral thoughts
- It is impossibly to reliably infer the intext of a text's author or the response of its reader
- The real questions are:
  - Can policymakers directly criminalize thoughts
  - How much collateral damage to marginalized communities can we accept

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Better solutions

- Trust and safety professionals can prevent unwanted exposure to offensive fiction
- Clinicians should have evidence to help them support clients with unhealthy usage patterns
- Lawmakers must be encouraged to follow an evidence-based approach
- The philanthropic sector should support human rights watchdogs in the sector

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