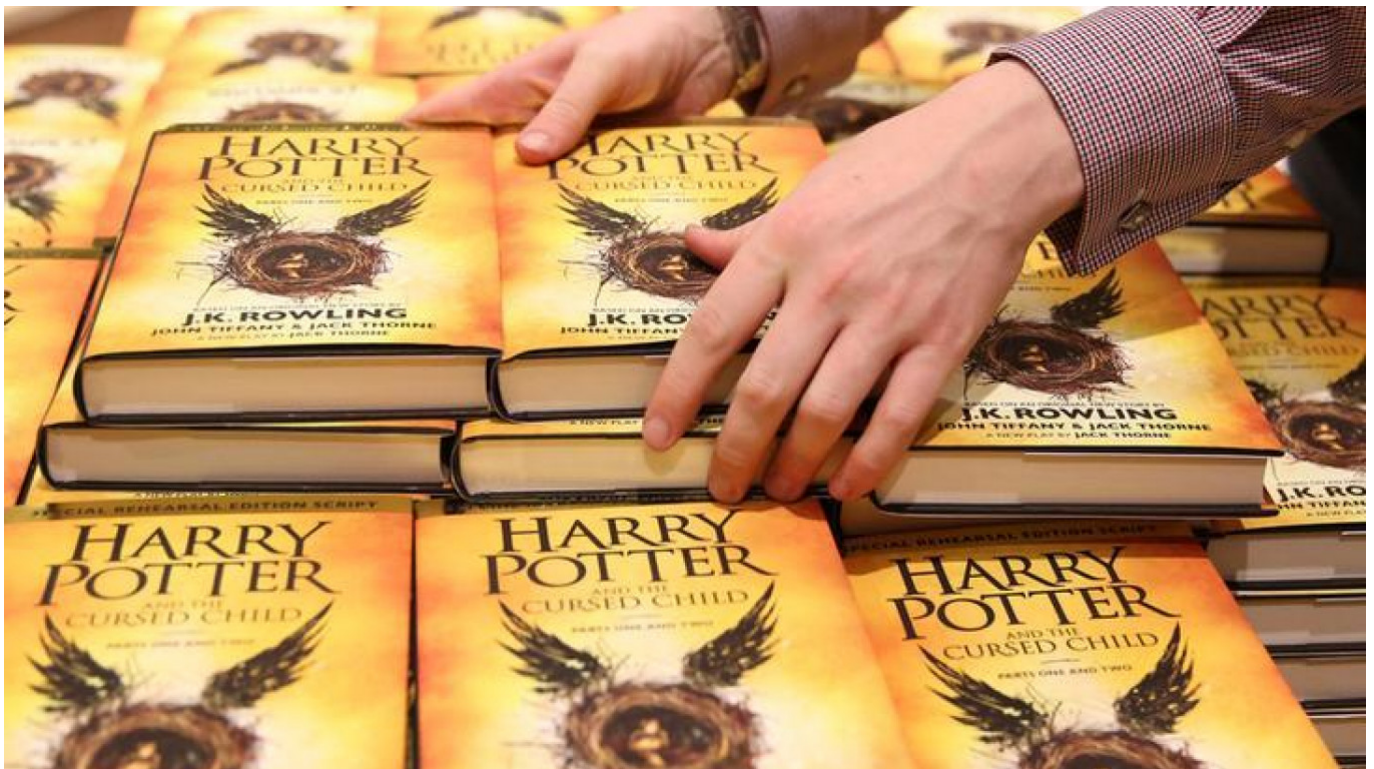


# The New Harry Potter Book Has Split Russia's Christian Activists

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Neil Hall / Reuters

Russian Orthodox activists are split over the new Harry Potter play, “Harry Potter and the Cursed Child.” In particular, two prominent Orthodox movements have taken different positions on the play, after years of controversy in Russia surrounding the seven bestselling books that preceded it, written by British author J. K. Rowling.

The “Cursed Child” script was first published in July this year, but the official Russian translation by Maria Slivak arrived only this Wednesday to mixed reviews.

According to the “Forty Times Forty” Orthodox movement, Harry Potter represents a plot by the Western mass media to poison the minds of Russian youths. “Because Western society is sabotaging the concept of good and evil,” the group’s leader, Andrei Kormukhin, [told](#) the website TJournal, claiming that Rowling’s books encourage young people to replace prayer and belief in God with magic and sorcery. Kormukhin also boasts that none of his nine children has read a word of Harry Potter.

Meanwhile, the leader of the movement “God's Will,” Dmitry Tsorionov (better known as “Enteo”), has refused to call the new Harry Potter book a work of “Satanism,” saying that the term would apply to many literary classics, including works by Gogol, if interpreted so strictly. Enteo told TJournal that he prefers the writings of C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien, but he says decisions about reading materials should be left to parents, ultimately.

Earlier this year, with funding from the Russian government, a religious charity released a shoddily made 90-minute film titled “Kids Versus Wizards,” based on a book published in 2004, where Harry Potter is portrayed as a hormone-injecting transvestite, and the wizarding world is led by a gang of evil sorcerers with Jewish-sounding names. You can watch the whole movie [here](#) on YouTube, if you feel the need to punish your eyes and ears.

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