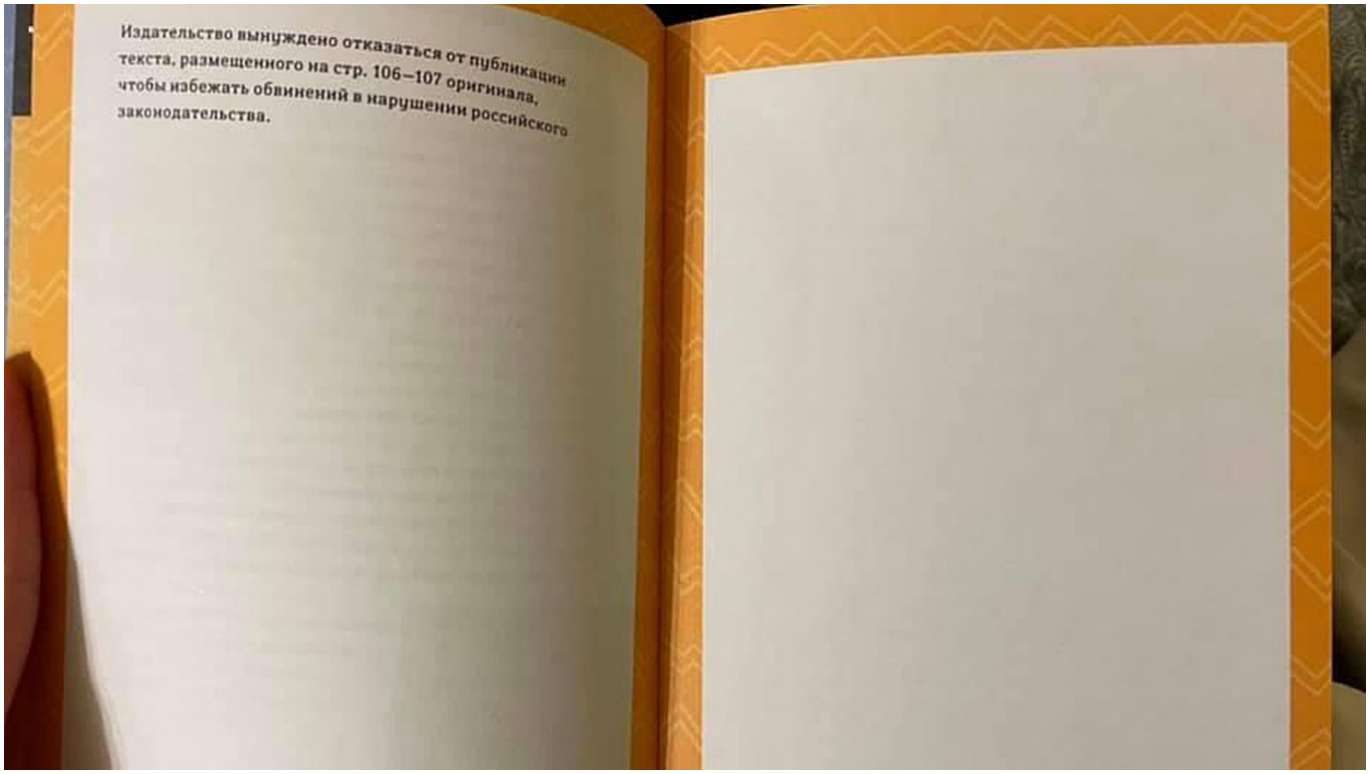
The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Transgender Pages Pulled From Russian Teen Health Book

October 25, 2021



The English-language version of “Welcome to Your Period!” — authored by Australian journalist Yumi Stynes and practicing medical doctor Melissa Kang — had included a section on transgender people. **Andrei Konyaev / twitter**

A Russian publishing house has removed a section on transgender people from the Russian-language edition of a health guide aimed at teenage girls to avoid running afoul of Russian law, media reported Sunday.

The Belaya Vorona publishing house said it received legal counsel that it could be subject to criminal prosecution if “Welcome to Your Period!” — described as an inclusive, body-positive “must-have menstruation manual” for girls aged 10-14 — was published in Russia as is.

Embed:

Из книги для подростков «Привет, месячные» вырезали две страницы. В

них рассказывалось о трансгендерных людях https://t.co/bzaFk3UlHP pic.twitter.com/ET9l1K0uJZ

— Подъём (@pdmnewsru) October 24, 2021

"As the lawyers told us, there's law enforcement in practice and there's the law," Belaya Vorona co-founder Tatiana Kormer told the Podyom news website.

"Then we were told with glee that if we publish it as is, then they'll defend us pro bono. We thought about it and decided that we prefer to be safe," Kormer added.

A photo shared by Podyom showed two blank pages with a disclaimer saying "the publishing house is forced to withhold the text in order to avoid accusations of violating Russian law."

Transgender people have long faced discrimination in Russia, including by being classified as mentally ill and banned from driving. Activists accuse the authorities of further marginalizing Russia's LGBT community with laws aiming to enshrine a traditional understanding of family and to strengthen President Vladimir Putin's support after two decades in power.

Kormer said publishing "Welcome to Your Period!" — authored by Australian journalist Yumi Stynes and practicing medical doctor Melissa Kang — without a section on transgender people "was more important than keeping the deleted information."

Podyom reported that the section on transgender people was kept intact in the Ukrainian-language edition.

News of the omission follows Putin's marquee speech last week where he pitted Russia's "reasonably conservative" values against the "monstrous" West that he claims ingrains transgenderism among children.

"People who dare to say that men and women still exist as a biological fact are almost ostracized," Putin said at the annual Valdai Discussion Club last Thursday. "Not to mention the simply monstrous fact that children today are taught from a young age that a boy can easily become a girl and vice versa."

The omission also comes as Russian activist and artist Yulia Tsvetkova faces criminal pornography charges for publishing body-positive drawings of women with varying body types, a case activists say is aimed at silencing LGBT and feminist activism.

Russian lawmakers drafted a bill banning transgender people from legally changing their gender last year, but pulled it after widespread outcry.

Its author had also spearheaded Russia's notorious 2013 law banning "gay propaganda" among minors.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2021/10/25/transgender-pages-pulled-from-russian-teen-health-book-a75390