

Russian Readers Turn to '1984,' Self-Help Titles Following Ukraine War

April 13, 2022



Sales of popular classics like “1984” and “The Picture of Dorian Gray” are on the upswing. **Denis Grishkin / Moskva News Agency**

Russian readers are increasingly buying up copies of George Orwell’s dystopian classic “1984” along with self-help and psychology books in the wake of their country’s invasion of Ukraine, the Vedomosti business daily [reported](#) Wednesday.

Book sales on Russia’s largest online marketplace Ozon spiked in March, up 30% from the same month last year, Vedomosti cited the retailer as saying. Ozon's main competitor Wildberries saw book sales increase by 75% last month, the company told Vedomosti.

Self-help and psychology titles saw a 12% increase in purchases, according to publishing house Eksmo, including “Be Kind to Yourself” by Olga Primachenko and “Yes to Life: In Spite of Everything” by Holocaust survivor Victor Frankl.

Book sellers also noted an increase in the sales of popular classics like “1984” as well as Oscar Wilde’s “The Picture of Dorian Gray.”

The increase in demand for books on psychology and self-help may be due to the “wider context” of the “special military operation” in Ukraine, Anna Karpova, Ozon’s director of business development, told Vedomosti.

According to Karpova, rising consumption of literature is a common trend in times of crisis.

Eksmo president Oleg Novikov told Vedomosti that there could be more practical reasons why Russians are buying more books.

Russia has reported paper shortages in the past month following a slew of Western sanctions, and many Russians are likely buying more books to avoid future price hikes, Novikov said.

Likewise, Wildberries said the newfound absence of popular Western entertainment like Hollywood movies is behind the spike in book sales.

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