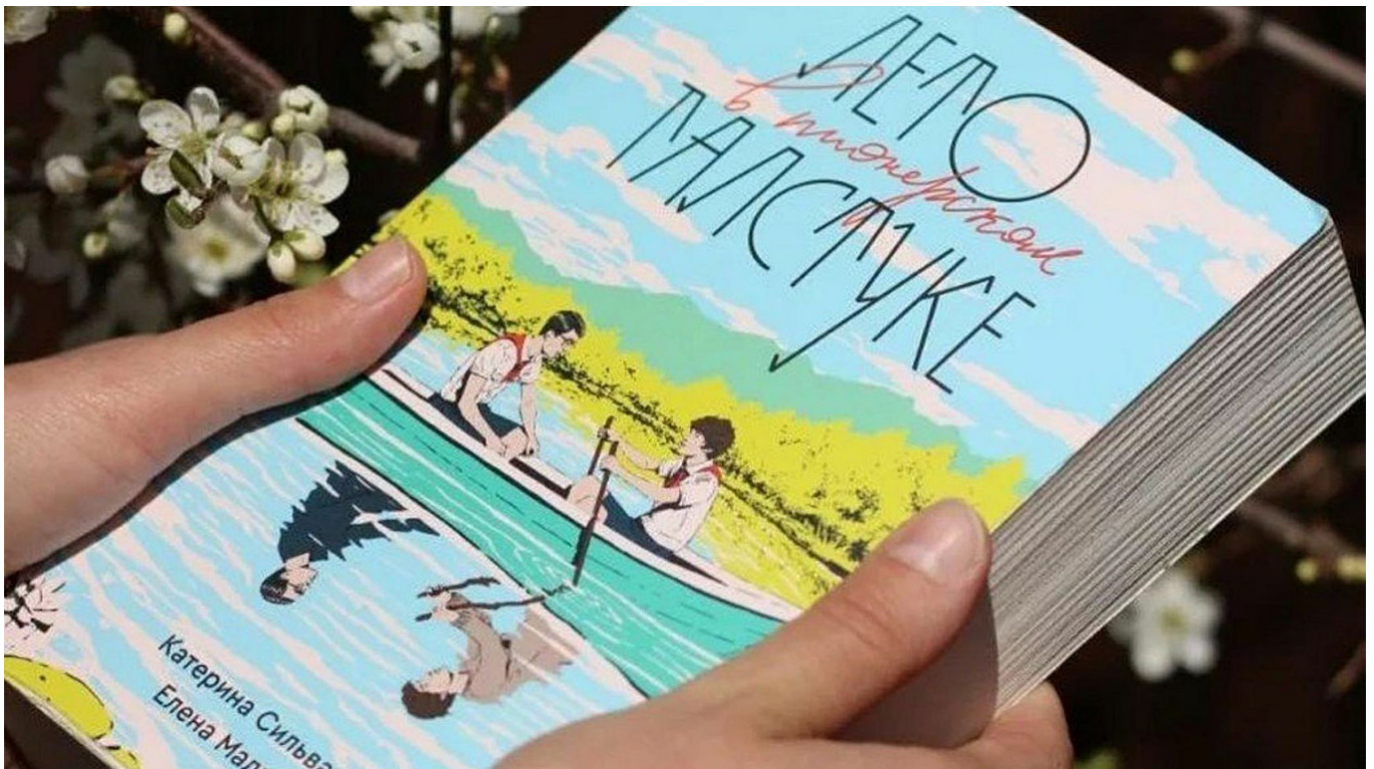


First Probe Opened Into Breach of Russia's New 'LGBT Propaganda' Law

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Popcorn Books

Russia's Interior Ministry has opened its first investigation into a breach of the recently expanded law against so-called "LGBT propaganda," State Duma Deputy Alexander Khinshteyn [announced](#) on his Telegram channel on Tuesday.

President Vladimir Putin signed a series of amendments to Russia's existing anti-LGBT legislation into law in November, making any promotion of "non-traditional sexual relations" to either minors or adults punishable with a fine of up to 5 million rubles (\$82,500).

The first investigation targets Popcorn Books, an independent publisher based in Moscow that had a recent bestseller with the highly popular novel "Summer in a Pioneer Tie," which centers on a relationship unfolding in a Soviet summer camp between a teenage pioneer and a camp counselor.

"This publishing house has played a leading role in promoting LGBT literature in Russia,"

Khinshteyn said on Telegram, adding that he had [submitted](#) multiple requests for Popcorn Books to be investigated by the authorities in the past.

Related article: [Choices Narrow in Russian Bookstores Amid Anti-LGBT Law, Wartime Restrictions](#)

"I hope that the case will be brought to court and that Popcorn Books — which has openly challenged the government — gets what it deserves," the United Russia deputy added, referring to the publisher's November decision to redesign several of its book covers to include the passage from the Russian constitution that bans the introduction of censorship.

State Duma Deputy Nina Ostanina last year [called](#) on Russia's communications regulator Roskomnadzor to open a criminal investigation into Popcorn Books and "Summer in a Pioneer Tie" authors Yelena Malisova and Katerina Silvanova, but the agency found no grounds to move forward with the case.

The highly popular book, which has sold some 250,000 copies, has been subjected to angry criticism from several high-profile conservative figures in Russia, including Oscar-winning film director Nikita Mikhalkov and writer-turned-politician Zakhar Prilepin, who publicly threatened to burn down Popcorn Books' office in Moscow.

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