The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

St. Petersburg Prosecutors Order Independent Bookstore to Remove LGBTQ+ Books

April 10, 2025



Podpisniye Izdaniya in St. Petersburg. **podpisnie.ru**

Law enforcement authorities in St. Petersburg raided a 100-year-old independent bookstore, ordering the removal of dozens of books they claim violate Russia's anti-LGBTQ+ laws, media reported Thursday.

Podpisniye Izdaniya received a list of 48 books, including by American writer Susan Sontag and exiled feminist poet Daria Serenko, that were subject to the removal.

In addition to LGBTQ+ books, six of the books were on feminism, one by popular dissident author Vladimir Sorokin and two others authored by "foreign agent" journalists Sergei Parkhomenko and Valery Panyushkin, the bookstore's staff member told the Telegram news channel Rotonda.

The broadcaster 78.ru showed uniformed police officers speaking with the store's employees

and shared photographs of its shelves with the labels “feminism” and “gender studies.”

Related article: Justice Ministry Investigating TV Presenter Urgant Over Alleged Foreign Influence

The St. Petersburg news website Fotanka reported that the authorities were particularly interested in books issued by the publishing house Ad Marginem, which publishes works by Sorokin, Sontag and other authors.

Major Russian bookstores Chitay-Gorod, Labirint and Respublika proactively withdrew LGBTQ+ books from their stocks in late 2022 as an act of self-censorship.

That December, President Vladimir Putin signed an expansion of his 2013 “LGBT propaganda law” which banned the display of LGBTQ+ relationships and “lifestyles” from books and other media.

Since then, Russian journalists have circulated lists of hundreds of books that they claimed were banned under the new “LGBT propaganda” law. Russian authorities deny keeping a list of banned books.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2025/04/10/st-petersburg-prosecutors-order-independent-bookstore-to-remove-lgbtq-books-a88679