

Newspaper Fined Over Violation of 'Gay Propaganda' Law

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Anti-gay propaganda legislation introduced in Russia last year has been used for the first time against media with the fining of a newspaper editor who reported about a school teacher supposedly being fired because he was gay.

Alexander Suturin, editor-in-chief of the Molodoi Dalnevostochnik newspaper in the Far East, was fined 50,000 rubles (\$1,400), local news website Amurburg.ru said Thursday.

Suturin, who blamed the verdict on a "shadow morality police" and "brown plague," said he would appeal.

Molodoi Dalnevostochnik, the oldest publication in the Khabarovsk region, came under fire because it bears a label warning people only above the age of 16 to visit its website, Amurburg.ru said.

A law passed in June prohibits the "promotion of nontraditional sexual relations among minors." The age of majority in Russia is 18.

The story in question, titled "A History About Gay-ography," dated back to September.

It detailed the claims of a local geography teacher and gay rights activist who said he was pressured into quitting his job at school and assaulted by neo-Nazis because of his sexuality.

Suturin denied in court that the report constituted "propaganda" of gay relationships.

The law against "gay propaganda" has provoked a backlash in the West and prompted calls to boycott the Sochi Olympics taking place next month.

The law prohibits informing underage children about the "attractiveness of nontraditional sexual relationships" and giving them "distorted ideas about social equality of traditional and nontraditional sexual relationships."

President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly claimed in public, however, that the law does not amount to discrimination of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual community.

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