

BDSM-Style Graduation Video Divides Russians

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YouTube

A controversial high school celebration in which students dressed in revealing outfits has divided Russian society over questions of morality and freedom of expression.

Police [issued](#) fines and a headmistress [submitted](#) her resignation in the Far East city of Vladivostok after video of the would-be graduates celebrating the last days of school in leather shorts, suspenders and rabbit masks spread online. Russian news outlets dubbed the celebration, presumably because of the students' suggestive costumes, a “BDSM party.”

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The 11th-graders later apologized for the “foolish act,” the state-run RIA Novosti news agency [quoted](#) the headmistress as saying Monday.

The controversial video split Russian society between those who lauded the students for their

boldness and those who criticized them as symbols of the nation's moral decline.

"Why's everyone so butthurt?" [wrote](#) Artyom Samsonov, a communist member of the Primorye region legislative assembly, in support of both the children and the headmistress.

Popular sports journalist and YouTube star Yury Dud [sent](#) "respect" to the "free boys and girls in the video," while former presidential candidate Ksenia Sobchak [asked](#) "What's the big deal?" in response to critics.

Meanwhile, Russia's Science and Higher Education Ministry [condemned](#) the so-called BDSM party and the [notorious](#) nationalist businessman German Sterligov called for the children to face the death penalty.

"I'm a Christian, and that's why I think they deserve death," he [said](#) on a panel show on state television.

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