

3 Things Russia Censored on TV in the Past Week

December 16, 2019



Youtube / MT

A series of censorship scandals rocked Russia's television landscape in the past week.

Here's a look at the three high-profile cases where words, episodes or entire shows were taken down from Russian television screens:

"Servant of the People"

The Gazprom-owned TNT entertainment channel [pulled](#) Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy's political satire "Servant of the People" off the air the day after its premiere.

Observers linked the show's cancelation in Russia to a scene where Zelenskiy's character mispronounces the Swiss watchmaker Hublot's name in reference to Russian President Vladimir Putin. The phrase "Putin — Hublot," which made it to air in the Russian Far East but was cut for viewers in central Russia and Moscow, is a homonym for a [common Ukrainian slur](#) aimed at the Russian president.

Related article: [Russian TV Pulls Ukraine President's Comedy Series After Putin Joke](#)

The Kremlin denied that censorship exists on Russian television, while Zelenskiy said he was disappointed by the decision to pull his 2015 series off the air.

“Protests”

The word “protests” was [muted](#) from a song performed at an awards ceremony by the popular rock band Bi-2 with singers Manizha and Leonid Agutin on Sunday.

The state-run Rossia channel later [said](#) the word “protests” was already muted when the broadcaster received a copy of the awards ceremony from its producers. The award show’s organizers, meanwhile, said they’re “not responsible for the broadcast,” the state-run RIA Novosti news agency reported.

Embed:

The award show’s director Andrei Boltenko [called](#) the word’s omission an “annoying technical malfunction,” RIA reported.

A group of Russian linguists [voted](#) for “protest” as the 2019 word of the year last week.

“Epidemia”

TNT’s online subscription service pulled an entire episode of Russian post-apocalyptic drama “Epidemia,” which depicted authorities shooting at a crowd of people, the day after it aired.

The service’s spokesperson [told](#) the independent Dozhd television news channel that it plans to air the rest of the series, including the censored episode, in February. Director [Pavel Kostomarov](#) called the decision a “surprise.”

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/12/16/3-things-russia-censored-on-tv-last-week-a68634>