

Revolution Stalled: The Political Limits of the Internet in the Post-Soviet Sphere (Hardback)



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Reviews

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(Dale White)

REVOLUTION STALLED: THE POLITICAL LIMITS OF THE INTERNET IN THE POST-SOVIET SPHERE (HARDBACK)



Oxford University Press Inc, United States, 2013. Hardback. Book Condition: New. 236 x 160 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. Can the internet fundamentally challenge non-free regimes? The role that social networking played in political change in the Middle East and beyond raises important questions about the ability of authoritarian leaders to control the information sphere and their subjects. Revolution Stalled goes beyond the idea of virtual politics to study five key components in the relationship between the online sphere and society: content, community, catalysts, control, and co-optation. This analysis of the contemporary Russian internet, written by a scholar with in-depth knowledge of both the post-Soviet media and media theory, illuminates how and when online activity can spark political action. This book argues that there are critical pre-conditions that help the internet to challenge non-free states. For example, Russian leaders became vulnerable to online protest movements and online social entrepreneurs when they failed to control the internet as effectively as they control traditional media. At the same time, Russia experienced explosive growth in online audiences, tipping the balance of control away from state-run television and toward the more open online sphere. Drawing upon studies of small-scale protests involving health issues and children with disabilities, Oates provides compelling evidence of the way Russians are translating individual grievances into rising political awareness and efficacy via the online sphere. The Russian state is struggling to change its information and control strategy in response to new types of information dissemination, networking, and protest. At the same time, this new environment has transformed a state strategy of co-opted elections into a powerful catalyst for protest and demands for rights. While the revolution remains stalled, Oates shows how a new and changing generation of internet users is transforming the public sphere in Russia.

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