

Censorship

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[REDACTED] blocking several thousand websites, including foreign media outlets and social media platforms.

Importantly, censorship does not (and very likely cannot) be all-encompassing; rather, even small increases in the costs to access or produce sensitive content make censorship efficient. Other mechanisms of how censorship functions pertain to the outright use of fear through legal or physical punishment of individuals when producing or consuming politically sensitive material, as well as making it more difficult to find potentially sensitive information (Roberts, 2019).

[REDACTED] nment censors social media posts that call for collective action. Other, more drastic examples include the internet shutdown during the Egyptian upheaval in 2011 or shutting down of news outlets during the 1979 Iranian revolution.

There is, however, also support for the so-called *state critique theory*, which predicts that governments aim to censor m [REDACTED]

Finally, in her study on movie censorship during Chile's dictatorship, Esberg (2020) provides evidence that the government does not only censor politically sensitive content but also movies

that are considered “immoral.” Whereas the censorship of immoral and inappropriate content is nothing new (Lasswell, 1930), Esberg's study illustrates that censoring such content can also be used to plea

It remains unclear how exactly these factors influence resistance to censorship.¹

For some cases, studies show that being aware of censorship events can backfire. This so-called Streisand effect describes an increasing interest in censored content and public awareness of censorship instead of silencing specific news. Miller (2022), for example, illustrates this

dynamic by

Miller (2023b) shows that

the blocking of Egyptian websites led to a substantial reduction in visitors and even the complete shutdowns of several news outlets. However, censorship in this case was not necessarily overt for citizens. More generally, the literature agrees upon that censorship can be much more effective in avoiding backfire

¹ A third factor pertains to resources individuals have to counter censorship. Citizens with less education, lower levels of political interest, and fewer economic resources appear to be naturally less capable to resist politically motivated censorship (Roberts, 2020, p. 412).



ould take a closer look at the government agencies that are responsible for censorship decisions. In Russia, for example, several authorities such as the Federal Service for Supervision in the Sphere of Telecom, Information Technologies and Mass Communications (Roskomnadzor), the Consumer Protection Service, and the Office of the Prosecutor General, among others, act as censorship authorities. Speaking to the literature on bureaucratic competition, it would be interesting to explore whether institutional competition between censoring agencies leads to higher levels of censoring in order

citizens know that the government is behind these blocks or not?

Third, and as emphasized at the beginning of this entry, most of the studies on censorship have focused on the government or government agencies as authorities. In times of social media and digital platforms, private companies have increasingly become relevant as censorship actors. On the one hand, private companies are often the agents that fulfill censorship requests. For example, to censor posts on social media, governments have to usually send requests to private

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