



NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

## **ITP Research Form 2006**

ITP: **Russia 2006**

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Paper Title: **NTV, Five Years Later: Is the Russian Mass Media Any More Free Today?**

Abstract: This Article examines the current state of the freedom of the media in the Russian Federation. It looks to the government-initiated takeover of NTV, a formerly independent and popular television station, as a case study to explain the extrajudicial means used to heavily influence the television industry. It then examines print media as an independent and alternative source of news and information. Finally, it provides a comparative analysis of the differences between current media freedoms in Russia and the United States. Freedom of speech is guaranteed in both the US and Russian Constitutions and is given further protection in the Russian Civil Code. However, the Article contends that in Russia these rights are not being enforced by the judicial system, are being stifled by government control over the largest media outlets, and are frequently ignored in an effort to maintain the political status quo. It concludes that although the current Russian Mass Media is significantly freer than it was under the Soviet regime, recent trends in media ownership, journalism, and media legislation point to a system that does not meet Western standards of free speech.