

Can bouquets put a crack in Putin's power?

Carilyn Pointer

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Candles and flowers left in remembrance of Alexey Navalny's Death

Carilyn Pointer - Aleksei A. Navalny has passed away [sparking](#) an unprecedented amount of reaction and anger. Navalny was a political opponent to President Putin that appealed to the working class. The circumstances of his death are shrouded in mystery, with many convinced that they are not natural circumstances. President Biden, in particular stated, "Make no mistake: Putin is responsible for Navalny's death."

Putin has held control of office for close to 12 years and has begun to circumvent the laws regarding presidential term limits. His spread of power and influence across Russia is considered a form of [ideological power](#) otherwise known as the power to get others to do what you want willingly. Many citizens of Russia readily accept his agenda, without considering other options. Following the death of Navalny, a break in that dominance of control has seemed to appear. His death has become a martyrdom for people, galvanizing them in their opposition to Putin's control. People in Russia have shown their solidarity by leaving bouquets for Navalny in the snow, leading to the arrests of over 400 people. Typically, Russians have followed the political goals of Putin because of his power and because it is "what is done." Those such as Navalny who deviate are then labeled as "radicals." It is possible that people's willingness to push back against the status quo Putin has established and maintains through force may indicate a turning point where the people take a stand.

What might that turning point look like, and how could it impact the war in Ukraine? These are questions many are asking now, especially those inside and outside

of Russia who want to capitalize on this momentum and mobilize it to fight against Putin's control.

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