self-serving constructions. But there are few historians, political scientists, political sociologists, or specialists in South Asian history, society, or politics—or, for that matter, students of many other parts of the world—who need a(nother) book-length reminder of the constructed nature of histories and communities, or, for that matter, of the violence through which they were (and continue to be) produced.

The book's most important contributions lie elsewhere. First, it makes a strong case for its title's claim of the *routineness* of violence. In an earlier book, *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism, and History in India* (2001), Pandey provided a powerful analysis of the almost unimaginable scope and viciousness of the violence that had accompanied the partition of the subcontinent. Such violence was routine only in the sense that large-scale killing, ethnic cleansing, and other forms of mass violence had long been associated with state formation and nation building; scholars and publics had become more or less inured to "the birth pangs of nations." Here, he shows that a country that, for decades, has been congratulated—and continuously congratulates itself—for its peaceful nature and intentions and for having established a stable, democratic state ("the world's largest democracy") not only can but routinely does foster violence. Such violence emanates from both aggressive and defensive social dynamics, but also from the state and under the cover that its machinery, laws, and routines provide to acts of communal, police, and citizen-on-citizen violence. The violence is both physical and contextual—that is, state and society creating and supporting conditions that facilitate routine physical, psychological, social, and economic harm to groups and individuals. The indictment is thorough, powerful, and quite convincing, though the emphasis on unearthing the array of forms and instances of such violence may obscure the extent and importance of the spaces not directly connected with it.

Second, more by implication than explicit extrapolation from the Indian case, Pandey's analysis suggests that much can be learned by looking at both contemporary society and historical constructions of collective pasts everywhere through the refractive lenses honed by the subaltern school. This can give rise to more critical and inquisitive publics, people who will habitually look beneath the pleasant, positive stories of who we are and where we have come from. The attendant risk is the growth of cynicism and skepticism about who we are, how we got here, what hope we can entertain for a more peaceful and just future.

One is left wondering, however, whether violence is a discrete, isolatable concept. Can it be usefully rendered into one? Is it a segment of a continuum—perhaps of amity to enmity, or benevolence to malevolence, or psychological health to pathology? Can degrees, levels, or forms of violence be arrayed on an interval scale—are two slaps one punch? Or are there identifiable thresholds, above which violence is categorically different from its manifestations below it? Is threatening violence a form of violence—and is it invariably in the source of the threat, or is it sometimes in the perception of the putative target? A few other questions, not trivial from the perspective of theory, remained for me: When it comes to the state's and elites' roles in routinizing violence, is state authority different in kind or morality from "unofficial" authority, such as that of leaders of an ethnic group, a sect, or a party? Who or what authorizes violence; and is authorization tantamount to authorship, or must the latter be manifested in action?

These are two exceptional works of scholarship. In addition to informing and enlightening readers about the countries on which they focus, they provide analytic insights and theoretical suggestions for understanding countries in the throes of political development, as well as the paths traveled by, and ambiguities remaining in, more "advanced" societies presumed to be politically developed.

State Feminism and Political Representation. Edited by Joni Lovenduski with Claudie Baudino, Marila Guadagnini, Petra Meier, and Diane Sainsbury. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. 315p., $34.99 paper, $85.00 cloth.
DOI: 10.1017/S1537592707072039

— Jill Vickers, *Carleton University*

This latest volume from the Research Network on Gender Politics and the State (RNGS), inspired by Amy Mazur and Dorothy Stetson's 1995 *Comparative State Feminism*, explores women's campaigns for political representation in 10 European Union countries (Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, and Sweden) and the United States. The introduction and conclusion outline the RNGS framework, hypotheses, and findings, based on 33 debates (the basic unit of analysis) over three decades. Eleven chapters present each country's debates. RNGS promotes a theory of state feminism defined as "the advocacy of women's movement demands inside the state" (p. 4).

The volume's thesis is that women's policy agencies (WPAs) enhance women's movement activism, and promote positive outcomes, by working within state (and party) decisional arenas on gender issues; frame or reframe debates; and provide "necessary and effective linkages between women's movement activism and . . . democratic states" (p. 11). The goal is to identify characteristics of WPAs, movements, and policy environments most likely to make this happen.

The editors claim confirmation of state feminism theory (p. 292), but admit that it applies mostly when parties of the Left are in government. Consequently, "when the left was not in power, movements were successful in fewer than half of the debates [even] where WPAs were insider[s]" (p. 284). Cohesive women's movements that united

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around an issue and gave it significant priority were also needed. This argument was initiated by Nordic scholars in *Unfinished Democracy,* ed. E. Haavio-Mannila et al. (1985), and *Equal Democracies,* ed. Christina Bergqvist et al. (1999). But the claim that it applies to postindustrial democracies generally is less persuasive. Moreover, high representational levels in some less developed countries (e.g., Rwanda with 48% women legislators) suggest that more complex factors may be at play.

The book's strength lies in the fascinating insights the country chapters provide into debates about completing democracy by including more women in decision making. Unlike notoriously uneven collections, the country chapters follow a set format that makes comparisons easy, but involves much repetition since information appears in various sections. Frustratingly, some chapters mention debates about constitutional or state restructuring, which were not chosen because they did not fit the criteria of RNGS. Over a third (12/33) of the debates deal with quotas or parity. Some interesting analyses about more general reforms to electoral and voting systems, the civil service, and corporatism resulted, however, because authors were asked to select one debate not explicitly about women's representation. While the RNGS framework may be suitable for debates about job training, abortion, or prostitution, it needed to be adapted more to capture debates about the representational opportunities posed by nation-state restructurings. German reunification, federalization in Belgium and Spain, and devolution in Britain are tantalizingly mentioned but not analyzed. And although all debates, except three in the United States, happened within the EU, and nearly half the countries are federal states, the RNGS framework does not assess the impact of multilevel governance on the political environment (though Janine Parry's useful U.S. chapter does).

The framework assumes stable state structures and no impact from EU or sub-national WPAs. Glimpses of women's representational achievements in the new legislatures of Scotland and Wales, in Joni Lovenduski's excellent UK chapter, made me regret that debates about such institutional restructurings also were excluded. The absence of debates about representational claims directed at courts is puzzling to a North American, since senior courts often declared unconstitutional the legislation that women promoted. These omissions limit the book's contribution to global representational debates, although the country chapters make a valuable contribution in their own right.

The research reported in the book also advances the methodological development of feminist political science. The operationalizing of concepts, including the gendering of debates and descriptive versus substantive representation, is insightful and likely to be adopted. Women's movement activism is difficult to compare across jurisdictions because of the diverse meanings of key concepts. RNGS finesses this problem by using a "local option" strategy in which authors determine what is feminist during each of their country's debates. This works well, though neither editors nor most authors avoid frequent conceptual slippage between feminist and women's movements. Moreover, the women's movements analyzed are mainly those actors willing to engage with the state. While this is argued to be legitimate because the debates involved participating in state politics, we are often left with little understanding of how autonomous feminist movements saw things, and it is never revealed how women's groups/movements aligned with mixed-sex projects (nationalist or antiracist movements) viewed representational demands based on gender alone. (Aligned movements are invisible throughout.)

There is also slippage between the use of women (as a social category) and women's movements; this distinction is important for understanding the behavior of state WPAs, which usually are mandated to act for the social category. Moreover, women are treated mostly as a homogenous social category. The local-option strategy is also implicitly used to classify WPAs. Missing from the categories is one that other scholars of WPAs consider key: if they are part of the state, that is, staffed by regular civil servants. Johnathan Malloy (in *Between Colliding Worlds: The Ambiguous Existence of Government Agencies for Aboriginal and Women's Policy,* 2003) distinguishes between agencies that are part of the civil service and accountable to elected officials through a minister and those outside that are independent of bureaucratic norms. Consequently, this book misses the impact of new public management, which a theory of state feminism must take into account to capture how changes in state agencies affect their ability to advocate for women. Understanding the concept of accountability that each WPA holds would reveal the "boundary spanning" functions Malloy theorizes for agencies located between states and movements. These boundary-spanning agencies offer new insights for state-feminist theory that should be explored by RNGSs.

Nonetheless, the book represents significant methodological achievements and should encourage more broadly comparative projects. It is a useful contribution to feminist political science, from an energetic group of scholars.

Economic Autonomy and Democracy: Hybrid Regimes in Russia and Kyrgyzstan. By Kelly M. McMann. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. 259p. $75.00.
DOI: 10.1017/S1537592707072040

— Elizabeth Frombgen, *Hastings College*

Kelly M. McMann's work is a welcome addition to the burgeoning literature on democracy and democratization with the discussion of a new form of government, namely the *hybrid regime.* McMann uses a multidimensional approach to understand a complex and conceptually messy issue: democratic participation. Like other scholars, she

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