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Heldt Prize: Kollmann, Continued

Honorable Mention in the category of Best Book in Slavic/Eastern European/Eurasian Studies.

Nancy Kollmann, *Crime and Punishment in Early Modern Russia* (Cambridge University Press, 2012)

Nancy Kollmann's monograph, *Crime and Punishment in Early Modern Russia* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), marks a significant milestone in her long and illustrious career. Although all historians aspire to be at the forefront of a paradigm change in historical research, few produce scholarship that forces us to seriously reconsider older categories of understanding. In her previous book, *By Honor Bound. State and Society in Early Modern Russia* (1999), Kollmann showed that while the Muscovite State in the sixteenth and seventeenth century was autocratic in principle, in practice it had to accommodate a variety of societal interests and identities that were located in family relationships, household arrangements, social status and geographical location. In arguing that the lived experience in Muscovy was not greatly dissimilar to that in Western Europe in that period, Kollmann advanced a radically new way of thinking about Russian history in the early modern period, one that challenged the particularity of Russian historical development as compared to the "normal evolution," of Western Europe. In her current book, Kollmann's has used her meticulous and exhaustive historical research to destroy similar myths about the supposed "lawlessness" of early modern Russia as compared to the legal bases and rationality of West European states and societies. She argues that in addition to written law that governed the disposition of criminal cases, Muscovite judges were constrained by local circumstances and local expectations of what constituted justice. Thus while the state administered spectacular punishments in criminal cases, like that in Western Europe, to bolster its legitimacy, it was also capable of tactical capitulations to the moral economy of the crowd. Based on copious data, and written with conviction and verve, Kollmann's monograph has received Honorable Mention for the Heldt Prize in the category of Best Book in Slavic/Eastern European/Eurasian Studies.