

SITAO LI

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CURRENT POSITION

National University of Singapore, Faculty of Law, Singapore
NUS Law Laureate Fellow (Post-Doc)

EDUCATION

University of Toronto, Toronto, ON

Ph.D. in Sociology, 2025

Dissertation Committee: Phil Goodman (Co-Chair), Sida Liu (Co-Chair), and Gail Super

Dissertation Project: The Fragmentation of Judicial Roles: Legality, Performance, and Punishment in Chinese Criminal Justice

University of California, Berkeley, School of Law, Berkeley, CA

J.D. (Juris Doctor), 2019

University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, CA

B.A. in Political Science, 2015

PUBLICATIONS

Peer Reviewed Journal and Law Review Articles

Li, Sitao. 2025. "Procedural Violence in the Courtroom of Chinese Criminal Justice." *British Journal of Criminology*. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azaf043>

- *The British Journal of Criminology* is one of the world's top criminology journals.
- Impact factor: 2.1 in 2024; 20 out of 110 in Criminology and Penology.

Li, Sitao. 2023. "Face-Work in Chinese Routine Criminal Trials." *Law & Society Review* 57(2): 254–275. (Winner, 2023 Asian Law & Society Association Graduate Student Article Award)

- *Law & Society Review* is one of the world's top journals in sociolegal studies.
- Impact factor: 2.1 in 2024; 41 out of 434 in Law.

Liu, Sida, and Sitao Li. 2024. "Rights in China: Myths, Abuses, and Politics." *Annual Review of Sociology* 50: 737–755.

- *Annual Review of Sociology* is one of the world's top sociology journals.
- Impact factor: 9 in 2024, 1 out of 219 in Sociology.

Liu, Sida, Yun Xian, and Sitao Li. 2024. "China's Pragmatic Approach to International Human Rights Law." *UC-Irvine Journal of International, Transnational, and Comparative Law* 9(1): 46–76.

Liu, Sida, and Sitao Li. 2023. "How to Do Empirical Legal Studies without Numbers?" *Hong Kong Law Journal* 53(3): 1261–1276.

Book Chapters

Wang, Juan, and Sitao Li. 2023. "Judicial Relations in Local China." *Handbook on Local Governance in China: Structures, Variations, and Innovations*. pp. 417-428.

Book Reviews

Li, Sitao. 2021. *The Construction of Guilt in China: An Empirical Account of Routine Chinese Injustice*. By Mou Yu. *The China Quarterly* 245: 299-301.

Op-Eds

Li, Sitao, and Sida Liu. 2021. "The Irony and Efficacy of China's Judicial Reforms." *East Asia Forum*.

MANUSCRIPTS IN PROGRESS

Li, Sitao. "Risky Justice: Control and Legality in a Chinese Lower Court." (Second Round Revise & Resubmit at the *China Quarterly*)

Li, Sitao. "The Will (Not) to Punish: How Chinese Judges Convict" (Manuscript in progress, will be submitted to *Law and Society Review*)

Li, Sitao. "Disciplining Judges: The Hidden Function of Campaign-Style Law Enforcement in China." (Manuscript in progress, will be submitted to the *China Information*)

Li, Zhe, and Zhang, Yuhong, Li, Sitao. "The Performative Pursuit of AI Criminal Justice in China." (Manuscript in progress).

Li, Sitao. "The Undivided Self: The Cultural Identities of Elite Chinese Transnational Lawyers." (Manuscript in Progress)

Li, Sitao, Wu, Hongqi, and Sida Liu. "Why Lawyers Break the Law." (Manuscript in progress)

Liu, Sida, and Sitao Li. "The Rise of Conservative Chinese Legal Academics in the Early 21st Century." (Submitted for review as a book chapter)

TEACHING EXPERIENCES

Teaching Assistantships (University of Toronto):

Law and Social Theory (SOC325)

Law and Rights (SOC205)

Sociology of Punishment (SOC371)

Theories in Criminology (SOC205)

Crime and Organizations (SOC208)

Introduction to Sociology (SOC100)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCES

Research Assistantships:

Law and Legal Career Project (Sida Liu at University of Toronto)

South African Criminal Trial Project (Gail Super at University of Toronto)

Chinese Judicial Transparency Project (Rachel Stern at University of California, Berkeley)

CONFERENCES, INVITED TALKS, WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS

Conferences:

“The Performative Pursuit of AI Criminal Justice in Chinese Courts.” UNU Macau AI and Governance Conference, Macau, 24 October 2025.

“Risky Justice: Insecurity and Legality in a Chinese Lower Criminal Court.” European China Law Studies Association (ECLS) Annual Conference, China, Hong Kong, 19-21, September 2024.

“Risky Justice: Insecurity and Legality in a Chinese Lower Criminal Court.” Law, Court, and Judicial Governance from a Comparative Perspective, China, Hong Kong, 03-04, July 2024.

“Face-Work in Chinese Routine Criminal Trials.” Law, Court, and Judicial Governance from a Comparative Perspective, China, Beijing, 06-07, July 2022.

“Face-Work in Chinese Routine Criminal Trials.” Law & Society Annual Meeting, 26-30, May 2021 (virtual format).

Invited Talks:

“The Will to (Not) Punish: How Chinese Judges Convict.” University of Macau Faculty of Law, Macau, 11 September 2025.

“The Will to (Not) Punish: How Chinese Judges Convict.” Chinese University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law, Hong Kong, 9 September 2025.

“The Will to (Not) Punish: How Chinese Judges Convict.” University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law, Hong Kong, 8 September 2025.

Workshops:

“Macao Law Intelligent Q&A Platform: Demo Showcase and R&D Practice Sharing.” University of Macau Faculty of Law, Macau, 23 October 2025.

“The Will to (Not) Punish: How Chinese Judges Convict.” NUS Law Faculty Research Workshop, Singapore, 22 October 2025.

“The Mortification and Preservation of the Self in Chinese Criminal Trials.” Training Initiative for Asian Law & Society Scholars (TRIALS), Workshop 5, Singapore, NUS, July 31 to August 3, 2023. (participation is based on selection and sponsored)

GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

2023. Asian Law & Society Association (ALSA) Graduate Student Article Award For “Face-Work in Chinese Routine Criminal Trials.”

2019. S.D. Clark Fellowship, University of Toronto.

2019. Department of Sociology Graduate Program Award, University of Toronto.

WORKING EXPERIENCES

The Bronx Defenders, New York, NY

Legal Intern, Summer 2018

Interviewed clients, assisted criminal attorneys in trials, and researched and drafted pre-trial motions.

California Appellate Project, San Francisco, CA

Legal Clerk, Fall 2017

Researched and drafted legal memoranda on Fourth Amendment and due process issues in capital cases.

Santa Clara County Public Defender Office, Santa Clara, CA

Legal Clerk, Summer 2017

Researched and drafted legal memoranda for pre-trial motions and evidentiary issues.

Prisoner Advocacy Network, Berkeley Law, Berkeley, CA

Volunteer, March 2017-May 2018

Assisted prisoners with filing administrative appeals and filing complaints.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Association memberships:

American Sociological Association

American Society of Criminology

Law & Society Association

Asian Law & Society Association

Reviewer for various journals, including:

Law & Society Review

Law & Social Inquiry

Law & Policy

Asian Journal of Law and Society

Asian Journal of Comparative Law

Punishment & Society

International Journal of Law in Context

Hong Kong Law Journal