

# RACHEL E. STERN

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Jurisprudence and Social Policy Program  
UC Berkeley School of Law  
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## CURRENT POSITION

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- 2018-present      Professor of Law and Political Science  
Jurisprudence and Social Policy Program, UC Berkeley School of Law  
Pamela P. Fong and Family Distinguished Chair in China Studies (2018-2024)
- 2012-2018      Assistant Professor of Law and Political Science  
Jurisprudence and Social Policy Program, UC Berkeley School of Law

## FORMER APPOINTMENTS

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- 2022-2023      Researcher, Paris Institute for Advanced Study  
Visiting Scholar, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS)
- 2014-2018      Non-Resident Senior Fellow, The Brookings Institution
- 2009-2012      Junior Fellow, Society of Fellows, Harvard University
- 2006-2007      Visiting Scholar at the Center for Chinese Legal Studies, Columbia University  
Law and at Qinghua University Law School in Beijing

## EDUCATION

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- 2009      University of California, Berkeley  
Ph.D. in Political Science
- 2001      Wellesley College  
B.A. in International Relations, *Summa Cum Laude*

## BOOK

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*Environmental Litigation in China: A Study in Political Ambivalence*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2013.

*Honorable mention for the 2014 Herbert Jacob book prize for the best book on law and society published in the previous two years.*

## REFEREED ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

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“Addressing Missingness in Serialized Bureaucratic Data: The Case of Chinese Courts” (with Xiaohan Wu, Margaret Roberts, Benjamin L. Liebman, Amarnath Gupta and Luke Sanford), *Sociological Methods and Research* (forthcoming).

“Out From the Shadows: Party Documents in Chinese Courts” (with Benjamin L. Liebman, Wenwa Gao, Xiaohan Wu, and Margaret E. Roberts), *Berkeley Journal of International Law* (forthcoming).

“Tort Law Heterodoxy in China” (with Benjamin L. Liebman, Wenwa Gao and Xiaohan Wu), in *Legal Heterodoxy in the Global South*, Kevin E. Davis and Mariana Pargendler Eds. Cambridge University Press: forthcoming.

“Performing Legality: When and Why Chinese Government Leaders Show Up in Court” (with Jieun Kim and Benjamin L. Liebman), *Journal of Chinese Political Science* (2024), 1-19.

“Rolling Back Transparency in China’s Courts” (with Benjamin L. Liebman, Xiaohan Wu and Margaret Roberts), *Columbia Law Review*, Vol 23, No. 8 (2023), pp. 2407-2481.

“Agency and Aspiration: How Twenty-First Century China Complicates Our Understanding of Authoritarian Law,” *Droit et Société* Vol. 114-115 (2023), pp. 289-306.

“Liability Beyond Law: Conceptions of Fairness in Chinese Tort Cases” (with Benjamin L. Liebman, Wenwa Gao and Xiaohan Wu), *Asian Journal of Law and Society* 11:1 (2024), pp. 70-93.

“Closing Open Government: Grassroots Policy Conversation of China’s Open Government Information Regulation and Its Aftermath” (with Jieun Kim, Benjamin L. Liebman and Xiaohan Wu), *Comparative Political Studies* 55:2 (2022), pp. 319-347.

“Automating Fairness? Artificial Intelligence in the Chinese Courts” (with Benjamin L. Liebman, Margaret Roberts and Alice Wang), *The Columbia Journal of Transnational Law*, 59 (2021), pp. 515-553.

“State Adjacent Professionals: How Chinese Lawyers Participate in Political Life” (with Lawrence Liu), *The China Quarterly* 247 (September 2021), pp. 793-813.

“The Good Lawyer: State-Led Professional Socialization in Contemporary China” (with Lawrence Liu), *Law & Social Inquiry* 45:1 (Winter 2020), pp. 226-248.

*Winner of the 2021 Law & Society Association Article Prize for the best article on law and society published in the previous two years.*

“Mass Digitization of Chinese Court Decisions: How to Use Text as Data in the Field of Chinese Law” (with Benjamin Liebman, Margaret Roberts and Alice Wang), *Journal of Law and Courts* 8:2 (2020), pp. 177-201.

“Activist Lawyers in Post-Tiananmen China,” *Law & Social Inquiry* 42:1 (Winter 2017), pp. 234-251.

“Political Reliability and the Chinese Bar Exam,” *Journal of Law & Society* 43:4 (December 2016), pp. 506-33.

“The Outpost Office: How International Law Firms Approach the China Market,” (with Su Li), *Law & Social Inquiry* 41:1 (Winter 2016), pp. 184-211.

“The Authoritarian Logic of Regulatory Pluralism: Understanding China's New Environmental Actors,” (with Benjamin van Rooij and Kathinka Furst), *Regulation & Governance* 10:1 (March 2016), pp. 3-13.

“The Political Logic of China’s New Environmental Courts,” *The China Journal* (July 2014), pp. 53-74.

“Amplifying Silence: Uncertainty and Control Parables in Contemporary China” (with Jonathan Hassid). *Comparative Political Studies* 45:10 (October 2012), pp. 1230-1254.

“Politics at the Boundary: Mixed Signals and the Chinese State” (with Kevin J. O’Brien). *Modern China* 38:2 (March 2012), pp. 175-199.

“From Dispute to Decision: Suing Polluters in China,” *The China Quarterly* 206 (June 2011), pp. 294-312.

“On the Frontlines: Making Decisions in Chinese Civil Environmental Lawsuits,” *Law & Policy* 32:1 (January 2010), pp. 79-103.

“Studying Contention in Contemporary China,” (with Kevin J. O’Brien) in *Popular Protest in China* (Harvard University Press: 2008), pp. 11-25.

“Unpacking Adaptation: The Female Inheritance Movement in Hong Kong,” *Mobilization* 10:3 (October 2005), pp. 421-439.

“The Female Inheritance Movement in Hong Kong: Theorizing the Local/Global Interface,” (with Sally Engle Merry) *Current Anthropology* 46:3 (June 2005), pp. 387-408. Reprinted in *The Anthropology of Globalization* (Blackwell Publishing: 2007) and *International Law and Society: Empirical Approaches to Human Rights* (Ashgate Publishing: 2007).

“Hong Kong Haze: Air Pollution as a Social Class Issue,” *Asian Survey* XLIII (September/October 2003), pp. 780-800.

## **NON-REFEREED ARTICLES, REPORTS AND POLICY BRIEFS**

“Poor Rural Residents in China Seen as Easy Target for Environmental Lawsuits,” *China Dialogue*, April 24, 2013.

External evaluation for grant on “Rights Advocacy, Accountability and the Rule of Law in the People’s Republic of China.” Prepared for the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative, December 2012 (30 pp).

*China Governance Analysis and Recommendations for a USAID Governance Strategy for China* (with Dali Yang and David Timberman). Prepared for the United States Agency for International Development, December 2010 (135 pp.).

*Toward Environmental Public Interest Litigation? Proposals for Legislative Change*. Prepared for the Natural Resource Defense Council Beijing, April 2008 (14 pp.).

*Evaluation of China's Energy Strategy Options* (with Jonathan E. Sinton, Nathaniel T. Aden and Mark D. Levine) (Berkeley: Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, 2005) (30 pp.).

“One Country, Two Systems, One Smog: Cross-Boundary Air Pollution: Policy Issues for Hong Kong and Guangdong,” (with Lisa Hopkinson) *China Environment Series* 6 (2003), pp. 19-36.

*Addressing Cross-Boundary Air Pollution: A Comparative Case Study* (Hong Kong: Civic Exchange, 2001) (24 pp.).

## SELECTED HONORS, AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

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|-----------|---|
| 2022-2023 | French Institutes for Advanced Study Fellowship (FIAS)  |
| 2017      | Hellman Fund Award  |
| 2017      | Collaborator on National Science Foundation award, Resource Implementation for Data Science Research in the Social Behavioral and Economic Sciences |
| 2014-2016 | Fellow in the Public Intellectuals Program, National Committee on US-China Relations  |
| 2013      | Research grant from the program on Globalization, Lawyers and Emerging Economies (GLEE)   |
| 2011      | Milton Fund Award, Harvard University   |
| 2007-2008 | Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowship   |
| 2006-2008 | National Science Foundation, Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant, Law and Social Sciences Program   |
| 2004-2007 | National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow  |

## COURSES TAUGHT

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|---------------|--|
| JD/PhD        | The U.S. Legal Profession in Global Perspective, Legal Institutions, Research Methods, Interdisciplinary Writing Workshop in Law |
| Undergraduate | Law and Rights in Authoritarian States, Law in Chinese Society   |

## SELECTED RECENT SERVICE

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| 2025-present | Editorial Fellow, Paris Institute for Advanced Study |
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| 2021-present | Editorial Board, Journal of Law & Courts                        |
| 2022—present | Executive Committee, Center for Chinese Studies, UC Berkeley    |
| 2018—2025    | Series Editor, Law & Society Series, Cambridge University Press |
| 2019—2022    | Graduate Advisor, Jurisprudence and Social Policy Ph.D. Program |
| 2017—2020    | Board of Trustees, Law & Society Association                    |