

To be fair, Kirkland does note the stinginess of the American social welfare system, and this is of course not her main subject. But given that the vaccine court is an attempt to get more justice for the families of those who may have been injured, it is wise to remind ourselves that there are likely more direct routes to justice. And it behooves us to ask whether the best use of legal energy is producing workarounds.

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*Criminal Defense in China: The Politics of Lawyers at Work*. By Sida Liu and Terence C. Halliday. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

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This lucid book is an important addition to a groundswell of research on Chinese lawyers. Aimed squarely at a sociolegal audience, it bridges two familiar research agendas: how lawyers work, and their prospects for political activism. The latter theme has been particularly prominent in writing about China, as observers reflect on the real world rise of legal activism as a form of political participation. But evaluating Chinese lawyers as a political force is challenging. Social scientists find ourselves sandwiched between journalists and historians, responsible for finding a narrative to link day-to-day news items, but without the benefit of knowing how the story turns out. Fortunately, *Criminal Defense in China* is written by two of the people best-equipped for this task, sociologists Sida Liu (University of Toronto) and Terence Halliday (American Bar Foundation). The book focuses on criminal defense as a "sensitive pulse in China's social and political life," and is firmly founded on 329 interviews and two careers spent considering the worldwide evolution of the legal profession (xiii).

The strength of the book lies in Liu and Halliday's ability to illustrate divides among criminal defense lawyers without losing sight of the overarching question of whether this group can sway the course of Chinese politics. Their typology sorts criminal defense lawyers along two dimensions: (1) political embeddedness, or the extent of a lawyer's ties inside the state and (2) belief in political liberalism, defined as restraint of state power through law. This yields four ideal types of lawyers whose goals and strategies diverge based on their relationship with the state and political beliefs (progressive elites, pragmatic brokers, political activists, and routine practitioners). These four types will be recognizable to those familiar with the Chinese bar, and are should also be useful to others who want to think about the range of ways lawyers position themselves vis-à-vis an authoritarian state. In discussing variation within the criminal defense bar, Liu and Halliday also make the important argument that political liberalism grows out of work experience. The most politically liberal lawyers, they say, are those who have encountered difficulties meeting suspects, accessing case files, and collecting evidence: older lawyers with mounting years of practice experience, and those with weak ties inside the bureaucracy.

For me, however, the professional solidarity that unifies lawyers is more surprising than the fault lines that divide them. *Criminal Defense in China* traces a "critical transformation from the 'birth of a liberal moment' in cyberspace to the rise of collective action in real cases among Chinese legal professionals" (177). Again and again, it shows lawyers standing up for each other by signing petitions, serving as legal advisors to backstop counsel on controversial cases, and voicing support online. Solidarity of this sort would seem to be a precursor to the legal mobilization that interests Liu and Halliday. But what is the magic that creates it? And has solidarity spread beyond the criminal defense bar? The book does not fully answer these questions, even as it underscores the importance of solidarity as a political emotion. What is clear is that social media is the main way lawyers find like-minded allies, and that the state-controlled bar association does little to build fellowship. Liu and Halliday's fieldwork also suggests that nascent solidarity is rarely strong enough to bridge the divide between transactional lawyers and litigators—a gulf that exists outside China too. An excellent chapter on the trial of lawyer Li Zhuang on charges of tampering with evidence treats it as a milestone moment of collective action, as lawyers banded together to defend both Li and the collective image of the profession. The Li Zhuang case, however, remains a rare example of transactional lawyers publicly supporting a criminal defense colleague, likely because Li was a partner at an elite corporate law firm in Beijing.

*Criminal Defense in China* was written as the leadership's repression of activist lawyers started intensifying. In China's tightening political climate, the book itself is an act of solidarity, and the authors plainly sympathize with the politically active lawyers they profile. Still, real world events cast a shadow over the text, and the political fears experienced by many criminal lawyers are unlikely to disappear soon. Mounting a robust defense remains risky, as lawyers can easily be charged with obstructing justice or tampering with evidence. Signs that political liberalism is gaining strength are also scarce. The most optimism Liu and Halliday can muster is to say the future is uncertain. The last line of the book takes a long historical view, casting the present as a moment when "forces for and against political liberalism engage in epic struggles as the world watches and waits" (182). *Criminal Defense in China*, then, is a snapshot of a profession in flux. It is a valuable portrait of criminal defense lawyers' beliefs and strategies, and vital reading for anyone looking to understand the prospects for legal activism for China or how the fight for political liberalism is unfolding worldwide.

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*Discourse, Identity, and Social Change in the Marriage Equality Debates*. By Karen Tracey. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

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The twenty-first century has been a time of exceptionally rapid change in the social status of gays and lesbians in the United States. This change has been contested and reflected in the legal field, where within 12 years the law's regard of same-sex relations has shifted from criminalization to legalization. In *Discourse, Identity, and Social Change in the Marriage Equality Debates*, Karen Tracey tracks how this shift occurred in debates regarding same-sex marriage in Supreme Court and legislative hearings between 2003 and 2013. She delivers a thorough empirical account of how law was made and interpreted through discursive processes, and how it was through these processes that changing social values infiltrated law and transformed it from the inside-out.

Tracey illustrates how law emerges through discursive struggle, the parameters of which are both structured and shifting. At the beginning of Parts One and Two, she describes how Supreme Court