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ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT



Matthew Sommer

Chair, Department of History
Professor of Chinese History

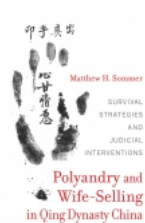
Field: East Asia

Ph.D., UCLA
M.A., University of Washington
B.A., Swarthmore College

My research focuses on sexuality, gender relations, chosen kinship, and law during the Qing dynasty (1644-1912) and the main sources for my work are legal cases from central and local archives in China. The main local archives I have used happen to be located in Sichuan, which is my favorite part of China (the photo shows me eating Yibin-style “flaming noodles” at a restaurant in Chengdu). I also like to use popular fiction and other non-legal sources for historical research.

My first book, *SEX, LAW, AND SOCIETY IN LATE IMPERIAL CHINA*, is primarily a legal history, but more recent projects use legal cases to explore social historical topics as well. My second book, *POLYANDRY AND WIFE-SELLING IN QING DYNASTY CHINA: SURVIVAL STRATEGIES AND JUDICIAL INTERVENTIONS*, was published in September 2015. I am now completing my third book, which analyzes male same-sex relations and masculinity in eighteenth-century China on the basis of some 1700 relevant cases. Long-term plans include a fourth book, about criminal procedure in the Qing dynasty.

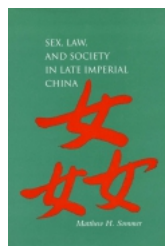
SELECTED PUBLICATIONS & PROJECTS



POLYANDRY AND WIFE-SELLING IN QING DYNASTY CHINA: Survival Strategies and Judicial Interventions

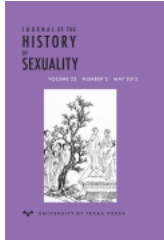
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This book is a study of polyandry, wife-selling, and a variety of related practices in China during the Qing dynasty (1644-1912). By analyzing over...



SEX, LAW, AND SOCIETY IN LATE IMPERIAL CHINA

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The Gendered Body in the Qing Courtroom

Matthew Sommer

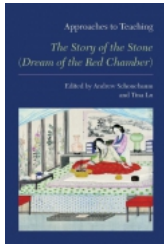
“The Gendered Body in the Qing Courtroom,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 22: 2 (2013) [Special Issue: Sexuality in Imperial China], pp. 281-...



The Field of Qing Legal History

Matthew Sommer

“The Field of Qing Legal History,” in Zhang Haihui et al., eds., *A Scholarly Review of Chinese Studies in North America*, Association for Asian...



Scandal in the Garden: The Story of the Stone as a ‘Licentious Novel’

Matthew Sommer

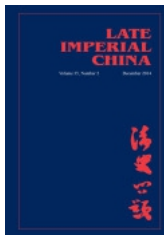
“Scandal in the Garden: The Story of the Stone as a ‘Licentious Novel,’” in Andrew Schonebaum and Tina Lu, eds., *Approaches to Teaching The Story of...*



堕胎在明清时期的中国：日常避孕抑或应急性措施？

Matthew Sommer

“堕胎在明清时期的中国：日常避孕抑或应急性措施？” (Abortion in Late Imperial China: Routine Birth Control or Crisis Intervention? trans. by Zhang Yu 张宇), 《中国乡村研究》 (...)



Abortion in Late Imperial China: Routine Birth Control or Crisis Intervention?

Matthew Sommer

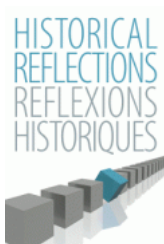
“Abortion in Late Imperial China: Routine Birth Control or Crisis Intervention?” *Late Imperial China*, 2010 (31: 2), pp. 97-165 (69 pages);...



清代縣衙的賣妻案件審判：以272件巴縣、南部與賈坻縣案子為例證

Matthew Sommer

“清代縣衙的賣妻案件審判：以272件巴縣、南部與賈坻縣案子為例證” (The Adjudication of Wife-Selling in Qing County Courts: 272 Cases from Ba, Nanbu, and Baodi Counties, trans. by...



Was China Part of a Global Eighteenth-Century Homosexuality?

Matthew Sommer

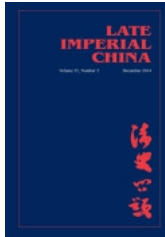
“Was China Part of a Global Eighteenth-Century Homosexuality?” *Historical Reflections/Réflexions Historiques* [special issue: Eighteenth-...



清代法におけるジェンダーの構築

Matthew Sommer

“清代法におけるジェンダーの構築” (The Construction of Gender in Qing Dynasty Law, trans. by Karasawa Yasuhiko 唐澤靖彦), in Mitsunari Miho 三成美保, ed., 2006: 《ジェンダーの比較法史学》...



Qing County Archives in Sichuan: An Update from the Field

Matthew Sommer

Yasuhiko Karasawa, Bradly W. Reed

“Qing County Archives in Sichuan: An Update from the Field,” with Karasawa Yasuhiko and Bradly Reed, *Late Imperial China*, December 2005 (26...



性工作：作为生存策略的清代一妻多夫现象

Matthew Sommer

“性工作：作为生存策略的清代一妻多夫现象” (Sex Work: Polyandry as a Survival Strategy in the Qing Dynasty, trans. by Li Xia 李霞), 《新社会史》 (*New Social History*),...

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HIGHLIGHTS

Read an interview with Matthew Sommer in 《南方周末》:

<http://www.infzm.com/content/108529>

Listen to Carla Nappi's interview with Matthew Sommer about his new book:

<http://newbooksnetwork.com/matthew-h-sommer-polyandry-and-wife-selling-in-qing-dynasty-china-u-of-california-press-2015/>