Acknowledgements

This dissertation would not have been possible without the help of so many people in so many ways. It was also the product of a large measure of serendipity, fortuitous encounters with people who have changed the course of my academic career. Had I not made the acquaintance of Leon Sheleff, Tel Aviv University, at a 1995 sociology conference in Beijing, I would not have pursued the study of Chinese lawyers. It was Professor Sheleff who first suggested I write my dissertation on Beijing lawyers, and it was in the capacity of his interpreter that I made my first visit to a Chinese law firm. This law firm happened to belong to the Institute of Law, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), and it was during this interview that I met Zhang Xinbao, editor-in-chief of the journal, *Legal Research (Faxue Yanjiu)*. Zhang Xinbao, in turn, kindly introduced me to Gao Hongjun, formerly of CASS and currently at the Tsinghua School of Law, with whom I have had the privilege of collaborating since we first met in 1996. Both Gao Hongjun and Xia Yong were gracious hosts in 1998 as we collaborated on the analysis of data collected with the financial support of the Ford Foundation. The faculty and staff of CASS's Institute of Law, in particular Xia Yong, Zhang Zhiming, Zhang Mingjie, Zheng Qiang, and Nie Xiushi, extended tremendous logistical support as I carried out my dissertation field research between 1999 and 2001. I cannot thank them enough for their friendship, trust, and support. Finally, it was Xia Yong who introduced me to Phyllis Chang, who, during her tenure as Program Officer at the Ford Foundation's Beijing office, provided the financial support necessary for me to stay in Beijing for a second year of fieldwork.

The seeds of my interest in China were planted as an undergraduate student at McGill University by Laurel Bossen and Kenneth Dean, the latter of whom took me to
China for the first time as part of an intensive summer study program at Xiamen University in 1991. They inspired the first and most important steps of what is a lifelong journey. For their unfailing support—both academic and personal—as I continued this journey at The University of Chicago, I am especially grateful to my dissertation committee members, William Parish (co-chair), Edward Laumann (co-chair), Andrew Abbott, and John Heinz. In my first three years as a graduate student, William Parish provided more opportunities to collaborate and publish than I could have ever dreamed of, helping set the stage for later opportunities and achievements. Working on the Chicago Lawyers Project at the American Bar Foundation from 1996 to 1999 under the supervision of Edward Laumann, John Heinz, and Robert Nelson solidified the direction of my research, provided the tools I would need to study Chinese lawyers, and also provided generous conference presentation and publication opportunities. Andrew Abbott gave me more freedom than any graduate student deserves, while at the same time providing crucial intellectual support at crucial times.

I wrote this dissertation as a doctoral fellow at the American Bar Foundation (ABF). The ABF not only provided the intellectual environment necessary to complete this dissertation, but also offered financial support generous enough to allow my wife, Xiaoxia Michelson, to stay home after the birth of our daughter, Rachel Xuerui Michelson. My dissertation research was conducted with the financial support of the Ford Foundation in Beijing, a National Science Foundation grant (NSF#9906234), the U.S. Department of Education (Fulbright-Hays), and a Social Science Research Council dissertation research fellowship.

As I planned and executed my dissertation research, I received the help of many people. Lijun Chen translated the initial draft of my questionnaire into Chinese. Zhou Xiaoping has been providing invaluable library assistance since 1996. I owe the success of my lawyer surveys entirely to Zhang Shouli and Tian Hongyan. Additional logistical
support with respect to the execution of my lawyer surveys was provided by Liu Guiming, Zhang Zhiming, Chen Jianmin, and Fu Jing. Of course the surveys would not have succeeded without the hard work of the 59 survey research assistants, whom I regrettably cannot acknowledge individually by name here. Zheng Hui heroically handled a massive amount of open-ended data entry and coding work, all of which he performed flawlessly. Wang Ping and Shen Weiwei may not appreciate the pioneering nature and superb quality of their observational research at our law firm field site. Wang Xiaobei translated hundreds of school names and job descriptions into English. Michael Dardzinski provided financial assistance obtaining newspaper and journal materials. Of course I owe all my research informants a debt of gratitude for all the time they spent answering my questions, either on questionnaire forms or in person.

SuperMap GIS Technologies, Inc. at the Chinese Academy of Sciences generously created a base map of Beijing postal codes for my use free of charge. The district and county base map of Beijing I use in this study was provided by the China in Time and Space (CITAS) project.

My write-up has benefited from the comments and criticisms of those who have read various drafts of various parts of this dissertation, including William Alford, Stanley Lubman, Kevin O'Brien, Neil Diamant, Terence Halliday, Bryant Garth, Robert Dingwall, Randall Peerenboom, Pitman Potter, Sally Merry, Deborah Davis, Kellee Tsai, Benjamin Read, Maranatha Ivanova, Ajay Mehrotra, and Elspeth Carruthers. Sida Liu, in particular, has been a supremely dedicated reader, critic, and stickler for detail. Jeremy Michelson helped with mathematical notation. Ming Wen reviewed my survival analysis methods. It should go without saying that I alone am responsible for all errors and oversights.

Finally I come to the most personal source of gratitude. When my wife Xiaoxia agreed to leave Calgary to join me in Beijing and then to follow me to Chicago, she
surely never anticipated the frustration and loneliness that has accompanied my write-up and academic job search. Over the course of this three-year intercontinental journey, that has now culminated with our move to Bloomington, Indiana, she has been my enduring source of strength. Beyond this, she has helped with the research and writing of this dissertation in innumerable ways. To her and our daughter, Rachel, I dedicate this dissertation.