**ABIGAIL STEPNITZ**Jurisprudence & Social Policy

University of California, Berkeley

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**RESEARCH & TEACHING INTERESTS**

Sociology of Law, Immigration & Asylum, Narrative, Culture, Gender, Qualitative Methods

**EDUCATION**

Exp. 2020 **Ph.D., Jurisprudence & Social Policy, University of California, Berkeley**

**Dissertation**: “Unsettled Truths: Law and culture in the construction and assessment of credibility in affirmative asylum claims”

**Committee**: Dr. Lauren Edelman (Chair), Dr. Ann Swidler, Dr. Catherine Albiston, Professor Leti Volpp, JD

2007 **M.Sc., Human Rights (Merit), London School of Economics & Political Science, UK**

Thesis: “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House: A Feminist Analysis of Gender Mainstreaming Policy in Rights, Security and Peacebuilding”

2006 **Graduate Certificate,** **University of Cape Town, South Africa**

International Relations & Conflict Resolution

2004 **B.A., Politics (Magna Cum Laude), University of San Francisco**

University Scholar

**PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS**

**Stepnitz, Abigail.** *Forthcoming* 2019. “Between Convention and Resistance: Counter-narrative strategies in political asylum claims,” in *The Routledge Handbook of Counter-Narratives*, Klarissa Leug and Marianne Wolff Lundholt, eds. Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.

**Stepnitz, Abigail.** 2018. “Re(art)iculating Refugees: Spectacle & the cultural contestation of law.”

*Berkeley Journal of Sociology* Vol 61.

**Stepnitz, Abigail.** 2012.“A Lie More Disastrous than the Truth: Asylum and the Identification of

Trafficked Women in the UK.” *Anti-Trafficking Review* Vol 1.

**BOOK REVIEWS**

**Stepnitz, Abigail.** May2019. Review of Canning, Victoria. 2018. *Gendered Harm and Structural Violence in the British Asylum System.* Allegra: Law and anthropology

**SCHOLARLY WORKS IN PROGRESS**

Tell all the truth but tell it slant: Women’s constructions of credibility in sexual and gender-based violence asylum claims

Duty and privilege: Framing volunteer immigration attorney experiences in family detention centers with Pauline White-Meeusen

This American Law: Storytelling and legal hegemony in NPR’s This American Life

**PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP**

**Stepnitz, Abigail.** 2018. “Migrant caravan members have right to claim asylum – here’s why getting it

will be hard.” [*The Conversation*](https://theconversation.com/migrant-caravan-members-have-right-to-claim-asylum-heres-why-getting-it-will-be-hard-101005).

**Stepnitz, Abigail.** 2019. “[What they’re reading](https://uchri.org/foundry/what-theyre-reading/)” Public bibliography for the UC Humanities Research

Institute Research Residency on [*Truth*](https://uchri.org/awards/residential-research-group-truth-spring-2019/).

James, Aaron, Spencer Coffey, Robin Derby, Liron Mor, Poulomi Saha & **Abigail Stepnitz**. 2019. “Conspiracy Theories.” *Truth: UCHRI Foundry*. Podcast audio, Forthcoming summer 2019.

**RESEARCH TRAINING**

2015-2018 **Research Assistant**: NSF “In It for Good: Individual and Institutional Determinants of Public Interest Law Careers”   
University of California, Los Angeles; University of California, Berkeley

**PIs:** Dr. Richard Abel, Dr. Catherine Albiston, Dr. Joseph Doherty, Dr. Scott Cummings

2017-2019 **Research Assistant**: NSF “Recruiting STEM Faculty: A Systematic Analysis of the Faculty Hiring Process at Research-Intensive Universities”

University of California, Berkeley

**PIs:** Dr. Catherine Albiston & Dr. Victoria Plaut

2015-2017 **Research Assistant, Berkeley School of Law**

University of California, Berkeley

**Supervisor:** Leti Volpp, J.D.

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

2019-2020 **Honors** **Teaching Fellow, Legal Studies**

University of California, Berkeley

**Courses**: Legal Studies Honors Seminar

2017-2019 **Affiliate faculty, Migration Studies (MA program)**

University of San Francisco

**Courses:** Global Immigration Policy & Politics (2017, 2018), Research Methods (2019)

2018 **Instructor of record, Legal Studies**

University of California, Berkeley

**Courses**: Law, Language & Culture

2015-2017 **Graduate Student Instructor, Legal Studies**

University of California, Berkeley

**Courses**: Youth, Justice & Culture, Teaching Learning in Higher Education, Foundations of Law & Society, Immigration & Citizenship, Law & Development

**SUPERVISION & MENTORING**

2018-Present **Master’s Theses Advisor, Migration Studies**

University of San Francisco

Esmerelda Cardona: “Gender and Vulnerability in Migration”

Nancy Giesel: “Terminology and Refugee Identification”

2017-2019 **Qualitative Social Sciences Leader**

University of California, Berkeley

Training for first-time Graduate Student Instructors

2017-2018 **Supervisor, Independent Study on Law and Language, Legal Studies**

University of California, Berkeley

Trained undergraduate students on qualitative methods and text analysis

**PRESENTATIONS &** **INVITED LECTURES**

2019 “Narrating credible sexual and gender-based asylum claims” **American Sociological Association** Annual Meeting. New York, NY

2019 “Identifying and understanding the construction of credibility in asylum claims.” **Berkeley Empirical Legal Studies** forum. University of California, Berkeley

2018 “This American Law: Storytelling and legal hegemony in NPR’s This American Life.” **Pacific Sociological Association** Annual Meeting. Long Beach, CA.

2017 “Through a glass darkly: Spectacle and the re(art)iculation of refugees, humanity, and credibility in contemporary Europe.” **Association for the Study of Law, Culture, and Humanities**. Stanford University

2017 “Law and normative orderings: Rhetoric and the cultural constitution of law.” Foundations of Legal Studies. Jon Marshall, Instructor. UC Berkeley.

2016 “Narrative, law, and discursive credibility.” 11 November 2016. **Yale Doctoral Scholarship Conference**. New Haven, CT

2016 “Constructing credibility in women’s asylum narratives.” Berkeley Immigration Studies Workshop. UC Berkeley.

2015 “(Re)making and being (re)made: Feminist and postcolonial engagements with the practice and process of citizenship. **Law and Society Association**. Seattle, WA

2015 “Asylum, gender, “culture” and the law.” Legal Studies: Immigration and Citizenship. Leti Volpp, Instructor. UC Berkeley.

**FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS & HONORS**

2019 UC Humanities Research Institute Residential Research Fellow, UC Irvine

2018-2019 Empirical Legal Studies Fellow, UC Berkeley

2018 Jurisprudence & Social Policy Program Departmental Research Fellowship, UC Berkeley

2018 Daniel E. Koshland Jr. Fellowship in the Art of Teaching Writing, UC Berkeley

2018 Center for the Study of Law & Society dissertation support grant, UC Berkeley

2018 Teaching Effectiveness Award, UC Berkeley

2018 Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor, UC Berkeley

2017-2018 Institute for the Study of Societal Issues, Graduate Student in Residence, UC Berkeley

2015-2017 Jurisprudence and Social Policy Program Departmental Fellowship, UC Berkeley

2014-2015 Selznick Doctoral Fellowship, UC Berkeley

2004 Mauricio Romero Award for Excellence in Academics & Public Service, USF

2004 Ralph Lane Peace and Justice Essay Award (for undergraduate thesis), USF

2001-2004 University Scholars Award (merit-based tuition scholarship), USF

**SERVICE**

2018-Present Chancellor’s Committee on the Status of Women, UC Berkeley

2018-Present Chancellor’s Committee on Work & Family, UC Berkeley

2017-Present Legal Studies Curriculum Committee, UC Berkeley

2015-2017 Jurisprudence & Social Policy Diversity Committee, UC Berkeley

**PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP**

2018-Present American Association of University Women

2017-Present Pacific Sociological Association

2017-Present Sociologists for Women in Society

2016-Present American Sociological Association

2015-Present Association for the Study of Law, Culture & the Humanities

2015-Present Law & Society Association

**REFERENCES** *contact details available upon request*

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Sociology

UC Berkeley

Dr. Lauren Edelman  
Jurisprudence &   
Social Policy  
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Leti Volpp, JD

UC Berkeley School   
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