**ABIGAIL STEPNITZ**Jurisprudence & Social Policy

University of California, Berkeley

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**RESEARCH & TEACHING INTERESTS**

Law & Society, Migration, 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**: Lauren Edelman (Chair), Catherine Albiston, Ann Swidler, Leti Volpp

**Exams**: Sociology of Law, October 2016 *Distinction*

Law, Language & Culture, October 2017, *Distinction*

2007 **MSc, 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**, International Relations, University of Cape Town, South Africa

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

University Scholar

**PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS**

Stepnitz, Abigail. *Forthcoming* early 2020. “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. 2019. “Refuge Beyond Reach: How Rich Democracies Repel Asylum Seekers*”* ***Law & Society Review*** 53(4): 1388-1390.

**Stepnitz, Abigail.** 2019. Review of Canning, Victoria. 2018. *Gendered Harm and Structural Violence in the British Asylum System****.*** [**Allegra: Law and anthropology**](https://allegralaboratory.net/review-gendered-harm/)

Stepnitz, Abigail. 2018. “Re(art)iculating Refugees: Spectacle & the cultural contestation of law.” [***Berkeley Journal of Sociology* Vol 61**](http://berkeleyjournal.org/2018/03/rearticulating-refugees-spectacle-and-the-cultural-contestation-of-law/)**.**

Stepnitz, Abigail. 2012.“A Lie More Disastrous than the Truth: Asylum and the Identification of Trafficked Women in the UK.” [***Anti-Trafficking Review***](https://antitraffickingreview.org/index.php/atrjournal/article/view/25/27) 1: 104-119.

**PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS UNDER REVIEW**

Stepnitz, Abigail. “Unsettling Truths: Credibility in asylum claims during settled and unsettled times.” Under review at ***Law & Social Inquiry***

Stepnitz, Abigail “Believing Asylum-Seeking Women: Constructing credibility in asylum narratives of sexual and gender-based violence” Under review at ***Gender & Society***

**SCHOLARLY WORKS IN PROGRESS**

Stepnitz, Abigail. “Managed Truths: Establishing and managing credibility in affirmative asylum claims.”

Stepnitz, Abigail. “It is like a horror: Narrative, credibility, and legal violence in the British asylum system.”

White-Meeusen, Pauline and **Abigail Stepnitz** “Duty and privilege: Framing volunteer immigration attorney experiences in family detention centers.”

**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) (43k+ readers globally)

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](https://uchri.org/foundry/rrg-on-truth-vampires/). 19 September 2019.

**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 Thesis Advisor, Migration Studies,** University of San Francisco

 Eric Beasley (2017) “Forced Criminality and Trafficking of Men and Boys”

 Esmerelda Cardona (2018) “Gender and Vulnerability in Migration”

 Nancy Giesel (2018) “Terminology and Refugee Identification”

2017-2020 **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

**FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS & HONORS (\*denotes competitive)**

2019 UC Humanities Research Institute Residential Research Fellow\*, UC Irvine

2018-2019 Empirical Legal Studies Fellow\*, UC Berkeley

2018 Jurisprudence & Social Policy Program 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 Inst. for 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

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

2020 **Scheduled** “Managed Truths: Establishing and Managing Credibility in Affirmative Asylum Claims.” May 2020. **Law & Society Association** Annual Meeting. Denver, CO

2019 “Asylum seeking in unsettled times: The changing nature and function of credibility in immigration law and culture.” 31 October 2019. **UC Davis Migration Research Cluster, Global Migration Center.** Davis, CA.

2019 “Mental Health and Asylum Seekers’ Legal Credibility.” 25 October 2019. **UCD Refugee Forum.** UC Davis. Davis, CA.

2019 “Narrating credible sexual and gender-based asylum claims” 11 August 2019. **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

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 & postcolonial engagements with the practice and process of citizenship. **Law and Society Association**. Seattle, WA

2013 “A woman’s place: Violence and the creation of gendered migrants and migration. **Critical Legal Studies Conference**, Queen’s University, Belfast.

**SERVICE**

2020 Jurisprudence & Social Policy Graduate Student Admissions, UC Berkeley

2017-Present Legal Studies Curriculum Committee, UC Berkeley

2018-2020 Chancellor’s Committee on the Status of Women, UC Berkeley

2018-2019 Chancellor’s Committee on Work & Family, UC Berkeley

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

**PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

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

**POLICY & ADVOCACY EXPERIENCE**

2012-2018 **Expert Witness:** UK Asylum & Immigration Tribunal, United Kingdom

2013-2015 **Monitoring & Evaluation Consultant**: European Commission

2013-2013 **Consultant: Feasibility Study,** Int’l Organization for Migration, Moldova

2008-2013 **National Coordinator: Trafficking,** Eaves, Ministry of Justice, UK

**POLICY & ADVOCACY PUBLICATIONS**

Stepnitz, Abigail. September 2013*.* **Rights, Restoration and Recovery: Realising compensation for trafficked persons in the Republic of Moldova.** Chisinau: International Organisation for Migration.

Stepnitz, Abigail. 2011. **Guidance and Best Practice on Identifying and Supporting Women Trafficked into Domestic Servitude in the UK.** London: Poppy Project.

Lam, Janice, Klara Skrivankova and Abigail Stepnitz. 2010. **Rights and Recourse: A Guide to Legal Remedies for Trafficked Persons in the UK*.*** London: Anti-Slavery International and the Poppy Project.

Stepnitz, Abigail. 2009 “The Mail-Order Bride Industry as a Form of Trafficking for Sexual and Labour Exploitation” in Milica Gaber, ed. [**Violence in the EU Examined: Policies on Violence against Women, Children & Youth in 2004 EU Accession Countries**](http://www.epacvaw.org/IMG/pdf/Violence_in_the_EU_Daphne_project_2009.pdf)*.* Pp 151-161. Ljubljana: Univ. of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, 2009.

Stepnitz, Abigail. 2009*.* [**Of Human Bondage: Trafficking in Women and Contemporary Servitude in the UK.**](http://www.eaves4women.co.uk/Documents/Recent_Reports/Of_Human_Bondage_trafficking_in_women_and_contemporary_slavery_in_the_UK.pdf) London: Poppy Project.

**REFERENCES**

Available upon request