



Three-Part Telephone & E-mail Seminar:

Asylum For Experts

Speakers: David Cleveland, Elizabeth Barna, Ashley Huebner, Nancy Kelly, Jeffrey Martins, Brian Mezger, Alan Parra, Helen Sklar

Available on CD

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Seminar Outline

FIRST Phone Session on July 22: Harm and Motive

- Economic harm: when does it "rise to the level of persecution"?
- Emotional harm: how to demonstrate it without an expert
- Physical harm
- Abortions, IUDs, and "added" children
- Ostracism and other types of harm
- Proving motive of the persecutor
- "at least one central reason" means what?
- Corroboration: what evidence will impress the adjudicator?
- Recent case law

SECOND Phone Session on August 19: Bars to Asylum and Particular Social Groups

- Internal relocation
- The one-year deadline
- Firm resettlement
- Persecutor of others
- Material support: when is giving under duress a defense?
- Domestic violence: my husband beat me
- FGM
- Recruitment by a gang
- Juveniles
- Other particular social groups
- Recent case law

THIRD Phone Session on September 16: How to Impress the Adjudicator

- How to get letters from the old country
- Country conditions information from where?
- How to interrupt the Asylum Officer
- Give what kind of documents to the IJ? Objections to DHS documents
- How to demonstrate harm, How to prove motive; How to avoid inconsistencies
- How to frame a "particular social group"; Is client a member of more than one particular social group?
- What if client has a bad memory and has a "flat" affect?
- DHS attorney and IJ relations
- How to make a record for the BIA

Signup

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SELECT YOUR DATES

[] Audio File July 22 [] Audio File August 19 [] Audio File September 16 2.00pm to 3.30pm ET (11.00am to 12.30pm PT)

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About the Speakers

David L. Cleveland (Discussion Leader) is a staff attorney at Catholic Charities of Washington DC. He is a graduate of the University of Rochester and of Case Western Reserve University School of Law. After being a college instructor in Indonesia for three years, David was a defense attorney for the District of Columbia, where he conducted over 40 civil jury trials. He joined Catholic Charities of Washington DC in 1998, specializing in asylum. In 2004, he was selected out of 275,000 candidates to be the "National Catholic Charities Volunteer of the Year." He served as the AILA representative to the US-CIS Asylum Office from 2003-2006; and as the Chair of the AILA Asylum Committee from 2004-2005. Articles and chapters by David have been published by AILA, Bender's Immigration Bulletin, and ILW.COM.

Elizabeth Barna, graduate of NY Law School and George Washington University, is a solo practitioner in New York, NY. She practices all aspects of immigration law with a concentration in asylum. She served on various committees of the New York Chapter of AILA, and chaired its Asylum/Litigation/EOIR Committee twice. She has also served on the AILA National Asylum Committee. She currently serves as the Treasurer of the New York Chapter of AILA, and on the NYC Bar Association Immigration and Nationality Law Committee.

Ashley Huebner is the supervising attorney for the National Immigrant Justice Center's (NIJC) Asylum Project, where she represents asylum seekers and other low-income immigrants and provides technical support for the network of approximately 1000 pro bono attorneys currently representing over 200 asylum seekers through NIJC. Before joining NIJC, Ashley served as the judicial law clerk for the Orlando Immigration Court. During law school, Ashley interned with the Boston Immigration Court, Catholic Charities' immigration department in Boston, and was a law clerk for a private immigration firm. Ashley graduated from Boston University School of Law and is licensed in the State of Illinois.

Nancy Kelly is an attorney at the Greater Boston Legal Services, Inc. in Boston, MA.

Jeffrey Martins is a private attorney in San Francisco specializing in asylum and refugee issues. After graduating from law school, Jeffrey spent 5 years as an Asylum Officer with the San Francisco Asylum Office and adjudicated over 3000 applications for asylum and refugee status. He also worked as an Acting Supervisor at the San Francisco office. While working for the Immigration Service, he traveled overseas to Russia, Croatia and Serbia to interview refugees for resettlement to the US. During the Kosovo war, he interviewed ethnic Albanian Muslims at refugee camps in Macedonia. He has worked closely with the UNHCR, IOM and other refugee relief agencies. Since entering private practice, Jeffrey has represented asylum-seekers at every level of the process from the Asylum Office to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. He has published an article on the one-year filing deadline for asylum in Immigration Law Today and spoken on many asylum law and practice panels in Northern California. He also volunteers at legal clinics and non-profit organizations including the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights and the National Center for Lesbian Rights. He also has been invited to speak on occasion at UC Berkeley's Boalt Hall School of Law.

Brian Mezger has practiced immigration law since 1997. He is a graduate of American University's Washington College of Law. A core area of Brian's immigration practice has been asylum, and he has handled over two hundred asylum cases from the Asylum Office to the federal courts of appeal. Including family members, Brian has secured asylum for about three hundred fifty individuals from some twenty countries. Twice following successful court of appeal petitions, Brian was awarded Equal Access to Justice Act fees. He practices law in Bethesda, Maryland.

Helen Sklar practices immigration law in Santa Monica, CA. She is admitted in the State Bar of California. She has been a solo practitioner since 1991 working on deportation and removal, appeals, family-based and employment-based permanent residence, temporary visas, I-9 and IRCA compliance and naturalization matters. Ms. Sklar represents clients in a wide variety of immigration matters, both administratively and defensively, with a focus on detained asylum cases and federal court appeals.