

Karen Musalo

Professor of Law, International Law Professorship Chair and Director of the Center for Gender & Refugee Studies at UC Hastings College of the Law

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Biography

Karen Musalo is Professor of Law at the University of California, Hastings College of the Law in San Francisco, California. She is lead co-author of *Refugee Law and Policy: An International and Comparative approach* (5th edition). She has written extensively on refugee law issues, and contributed to the evolving jurisprudence of asylum law not only through her scholarship, but through her litigation of landmark cases. She was lead attorney in *Matter of Kasinga* (fear of female genital mutilation as a basis for asylum) and amicus in *Matter of A-R-C-G-*, the first precedent decision affirming the viability of domestic violence asylum claims. Prof. Musalo is currently co-counsel in *Matter of A-B-*, in which the principle of protection in domestic violence claims is being challenged by Attorney General Sessions.

Prof. Musalo is recognized for her innovative work on refugee issues, being the first attorney to partner with psychologists in the representation of traumatized asylum seekers, and editing the earliest handbook for practitioners on cross-cultural issues and the impact of culture on credibility in the asylum context. She is a frequent media commentator, quoted in outlets such as *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *The Nation*, and *El Pais*. She has been interviewed on *Nightline*, *CNN International*, and *NPR's All Things Considered*, and was featured in the PBS documentary *Breaking Free: A Woman's Story*.

Prof. Musalo's current work examines the linkage between human rights violations and migration, focusing on violence against women and children in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. She is the founding director of the Center for Gender & Refugee Studies, which is internationally known for its research and legal advocacy and for its program of expert consultation to attorneys around the world.

Professor Musalo has received numerous national awards in recognition of her work on behalf of refugees, including the 2010 California Lawyer of the Year Award, the 2009 *Daily Journal's* recognition as one of the "Top 100" lawyers in California, and the 2015 Federal Bar Association Immigration Section's Lawyer of the Year Award. In 2012 she received an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Lehman College, the same year she received UC Hastings' Rutter Award for Excellence in Teaching. She is a frequent speaker at conferences throughout the United States, Canada, Europe and Latin America.

Expertise

Education/Learning, Legal Services

Areas of Expertise

Refugee Law and Policy, Gender Asylum, Women's Rights, Child Migrant's Rights, Gender Justice / Central America, Clinical Education

Event Appearances

Refugees: How Nations can Meet their International Obligations to Protect the Persecuted
Roundtable at the U.S. Embassy

Fronteras y barreras: Retos para las refugiadas en España y Estado Unidos (Borders and Barriers: Challenges for Refugee Women in Spain and the United States)
Speaker at the XX Coloquio anual sobre la mujer (20th Annual Colloquium on Women)

Credibility, Documentary Evidence and Expert Witnesses in Asylum Claims
Federal Bar Association, Immigration Law Conference

Domestic Violence and Fear of Gang Cases in the Aftermath of A-R-C-G-
Federal Bar Association, Immigration Law Conference

Fleeing Violence: Finding Prison: The Treatment of Migrant Women in Flight from Domestic Violence in the US Immigration System
Presentation

Child Migration: A Regional Challenge to Human Rights Commitment
Ninth Circuit of Appeals

The Battle for Equality in Refugee Law: The Resistance to Protection of Women and Children
Biever Guest Lecture Series

Excluding Those Worthy of Protection: How US Interpretation of International Refugee Norms have Consistently Narrowed Protection
Loyola Law School Faculty Colloquia

Conceptualizing Children's Asylum Claims
Immigration Theory and Practice Workshop

Child Migrants: A Journey of Desperation and Hope
Center for Latin American Studies

Addressing the Asylum Crisis: Religious Contributions to Rethinking Protection in Global Politics
Presentation

Forensic Psychiatry and Immigration: Cross Cultural Competency (Panelist)
Panel Discussion

Immigration and Its Adversities: Mental Illness, Detention and Deportation (Panelist)
American Psychiatric Association

Hot Topics in Asylum - Particular Social Group Issues (Panelist)

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Immigration Law Seminar (Panelist)

Memphis, TN

Gender Justice in the Americas (Panelist)

University of Miami School of Law

Education

Boalt Hall School of Law, University of California, Berkeley

J.D. Law

Brooklyn College, City University of New York

B.A. Comparative Literature

Accomplishments

Lawyer of the Year Award

Awarded by the Immigration Law Section of the Federal Bar Association.

Chair in International Law

Conferred by the Bank of America Foundation.

Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters

Awarded by Lehman College at the City University of New York.

Rutter Award

Awarded by for excellence in teaching.

California Lawyer of the Year (CLAY) Award

Awarded by the monthly legal magazine, California Lawyer.

Top 100 Attorneys in California Award

Awarded by Daily Journal.

Human Rights Award

Awarded by the East Bay Sanctuary Covenant.

Carol King Award

Awarded by the National Immigration Project.

Human Rights Award

Awarded by the American Immigration Lawyers Association.

Annual Award

Awarded by the New York Central American Refugee Center.

Outstanding Achievement Award

Awarded by the Political Asylum Immigration Representation Project.

Eighth Annual Phillip Burton Immigration and Civil Rights Award

Awarded by The Immigrant Legal Resource Center.

Recognition: The American Lawyer

Conferred in recognition of the publication " The Public Sector: forty-five young lawyers outside the private sector whose vision and commitment are changing lives."

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