

Attorney Tom Mesereau specializes in the defense of white-collar criminal cases (corporate and individual); the defense of physicians and health care practitioners before the California Medical Board and other administrative entities, and violent and non-white-collar crimes.

Thomas A. Mesereau, Jr. is best known for **Acquitting** the late music legend, Michael Jackson, of all fourteen charges in the most watched trial in legal history. Tom is widely recognized as one of the best trial lawyers in the country. He has been selected by his peers as one of **“The Best Lawyers in America”** and has been listed as one of the **“One Hundred Most Influential Attorneys in California”** by the [Los Angeles Daily Journal](#), the leading legal newspaper in California.



Whether he is defending a complex, white-collar case in federal court or a non-white-collar criminal case in state court, Thomas A. Mesereau, Jr. is a trial lawyer who wins. For example, in 2009, he successfully defended the highest-grossing real estate agent in the country who was facing 21 counts of conspiracy, money laundering, bank fraud, loan fraud and mortgage fraud in the [United States District Court, Central District of California](#) (Los Angeles). After a five week jury trial, his client was **Not Convicted** on any of the indicted 21 felony

counts (13 acquittals and 8 hung counts). (See Articles: [Babajian Acquitted of Mortgage Fraud in Federal Court](#) and [Lawyer Who Saved Jackson in 2005 Does It Again](#)). Earlier that year, Mr. Mesereau **Acquitted** his client in a murder case in a state court. Both cases were high profile. That year, two other jury trials (white collar felony embezzlement and alleged rape) ended in **Hung Juries**.

Mr. Mesereau has been named one of **America’s 100 Most Influential Trial Lawyers** by [The National Trial Lawyers](#) organization. Also, in April 2011, [Loyola Law School](#), Los Angeles presented Mr. Mesereau with the prestigious **2011 Fidler Institute Award for Excellence in Criminal Defense**. In December, 2011, the Los Angeles Times distributed a list of the top lawyers in Southern California. Mr. Mesereau was named criminal defense lawyer of the year. Earlier that year, Mr. Mesereau and his legal team were successful in having a judge dismiss a capital murder case prior to trial.

Barbara Walters named Tom Mesereau one of the year’s **“Ten Most Fascinating People”** for his trial excellence and commitment to representing the underprivileged. (See [Barbara Walters Interview, Special Video Presentation](#) and [Barbara Walters’ Letters to Mr. Mesereau](#).)

Professor Laurie Levenson, a prominent legal analyst and former federal prosecutor, has called Tom Mesereau the “best cross-examiner” she has ever seen. (See [Larry King interview, Special Video Presentation](#).) Beth Karas and Jami Floyd, highly regarded attorneys and long-time legal analysts for Court TV (now Tru TV) both say that Tom Mesereau is the best trial lawyer they

have ever seen. (See [Jami Floyd Interview, Special Video Presentation](#).) Rikki Klieman, award-winning criminal defense attorney and also a noted Court TV legal analyst, once called Mr. Mesereau "...if not the best, one of the best cross-examiners I've ever seen... He deserves all of the praise he gets." Judge Lloyd M. Nash of the Los Angeles County Superior Court called Mr. Mesereau "one of the finest lawyers I have ever seen" after watching Mr. Mesereau cross-examine prosecution witnesses in the **Robert Blake** murder case. (See [Los Angeles Times](#), March 27, 2003)

Tom was also named the "**Criminal Defense Lawyer of the Year**" by the **Century City Bar Association, Los Angeles**, when he freed actor **Robert Blake**, from jail. [California Lawyer Magazine](#) awarded Tom its highest award for excellence in criminal law when he acquitted pop legend Michael Jackson of fourteen charges of alleged conspiracy and child molestation. Tom's alma mater, the [University of California's Hastings College of Law](#), has named him the "**Alumnus of the Year**". He has received the "**Jerry Giesler Memorial Award**" from the [Criminal Courts Bar Association of Los Angeles](#) "... in recognition of his outstanding skill, perseverance and achievement in representing his clients in trial."

Thomas A. Mesereau, Jr. is also widely recognized for his 27 years of pro bono, free legal work for the poor and underrepresented. Mr. Mesereau is a well known presence in the African-American community where he operates a free legal clinic and assists local organizations and churches in drug recovery and youth counseling. For the past twelve years, he has defended at least one death penalty case each year for free in the **Deep South**.

Background

Attorney Thomas A. Mesereau, Jr. specializes in both criminal and civil trials (state and federal court).

Mr. Mesereau is a partner with the firm of Mesereau & Yu, LLP in Los Angeles. Tom was educated at [Harvard University](#) (*cum laude*), [The London School of Economics](#) and [The University of California's Hastings College of Law](#).



Tom Mesereau is internationally known for having **Acquitted** music legend **Michael Jackson** of all counts in a highly publicized trial in Santa Maria, California. Following a five-month jury trial, Mr. Jackson was found **Not Guilty** of 10 felony counts and 4 lesser-included misdemeanors. It was considered unwinnable. This case was covered by more media outlets around the world than any other case in history.

Tom first gained national attention

during a three-week televised preliminary hearing in the **Robert Blake** murder case. Celebrity actor Blake was facing murder with special circumstances, for which he could have faced the death penalty. Mr. Blake was imprisoned at that time with no bail. Bail had never been granted in California in a murder with special circumstances case when opposed by the prosecution. However, not only did Tom obtain bail for Mr. Blake, but also changed public opinion about the case. The hearing resulted in the biggest public opinion switch in Court TV history – from 80% of viewers believing Mr. Blake was guilty to 80% believing he was innocent.

Mr. Mesereau **Acquitted** the highest profile real estate agent in the United States of numerous counts of mortgage fraud. The client had been indicted by a federal grand jury, and the case was tried in the United States District Court, Central District of California in Los Angeles.

Since the Michael Jackson trial, Mr. Mesereau has also successfully obtained a **Dismissal** in an environmental criminal case on behalf of a publicly-traded Texas corporation; **Acquitted** a prominent physician of various counts of sexual misconduct; and successfully defended an over \$800,000 embezzlement case (**Hung Jury**). He has also **Acquitted** a client in a homicide case. Mr. Mesereau also obtained successful results in four capital murder cases.

Mr. Mesereau's reputation as a trial lawyer is unparalleled. For example, **in a one-year period**, Mr. Mesereau obtained **7 Acquittals** and **2 Hung Juries**.

He has won many high stakes criminal, civil and administrative trials before judges and juries involving a wide-range of claims, including securities fraud, complex business disputes, health care fraud, mail fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy, murder, sexual assault and the death penalty.

He is continually asked to speak before various organizations about trial strategies and the legal profession. He has lectured at numerous law schools, including [Harvard](#), [Stanford](#), [The University of Chicago](#), [U.C.L.A.](#), [University of Southern California](#), [Loyola](#), [Pepperdine](#), [Southwestern](#), [Chapman](#), [Thomas Jefferson](#), [Samford University's Cumberland School of Law](#) and [The University of West Los Angeles](#).

Pro Bono Efforts

For the last fourteen years, Tom has defended at least one capital murder (death penalty) case per year in the **Deep South** (Alabama, Mississippi). He has accepted no legal fees for these cases and has paid all of his costs personally. No one has received the death penalty.

Additionally, Mr. Mesereau founded and helps to operate a free legal clinic for the poor in south central Los Angeles. The clinic is named the **"Mesereau Free Legal Clinic"** and is located inside Morningside United Church of Christ:

8722 Crenshaw Blvd. (Manchester & Crenshaw)
Inglewood, CA 90305

Email: info@mesereaufreelegalclinic.com
Website: www.mesereaufreelegalclinic.com

The clinic's mailing address is:
P. O. Box 451867
Los Angeles, CA 90045-8523

Judges, lawyers, law students, community activists, and college students donate their time with Mr. Mesereau to advise and assist the poor and needy.

For many years, Tom Mesereau has actively donated his time to various inner city organizations that help impoverished and vulnerable people. These include [N-Action Family Network](#) (women in drug recovery and their children); **Save Our Sons** (black mothers whose sons are incarcerated); **Women of Watts** (mothers and their children who are against gang violence); **Families to Amend California Three Strikes** (families who have a relative serving a life sentence under this law) and other free clinics at African-American churches. Mr. Mesereau often speaks at middle schools and high schools about the need for education and the problems surrounding gangs and interracial violence. He has received many awards for these activities. Each year, [N-Action Family Network](#) awards the "Thomas A. Mesereau, Jr. Humanitarian Award" for excellence in public service.

Tom Mesereau works closely with **Image Principle Studios**, a small inner city entertainment and public relations company. This organization organizes and produces events that focus on inner city children, including the development of their creative talents.

Mr. Mesereau has received numerous awards and commendations from bar associations, law schools, the city of Los Angeles, the county of Los Angeles, churches, secondary schools, colleges, businesses and civil rights organizations, et al. for his excellence as a trial lawyer and devotion to equal justice for all.

Sample Cases

Sample cases defended by Mr. Mesereau include:

- In 2011, a capital murder case, in which Mr. Mesereau's client was facing the death penalty, was dismissed prior to trial.
- In 2010, Mr. Mesereau obtained a complete **Dismissal** of a criminal case which had been filed against a billionaire client. The client had been arrested and charged with criminal threats and battery. The alleged victim was a former girlfriend who had been a Playboy Magazine centerfold and Playmate of the Year. The **Dismissal** occurred after approximately one year of litigation.
- Mr. Mesereau's client, a Texas oil company, was charged with criminal conduct involving an oil spill in Southern California. The case was **Dismissed** by the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office with the agreement that it can never be re-filed.
- A prominent plastic surgeon was charged with various counts of sexual misconduct by the California Medical Board. The physician could have lost his medical license if convicted. A trial took place before an administrative law judge. Mr. Mesereau's client was **Acquitted** of all sexual

misconduct counts and was placed on probation for minor violations which he admitted had occurred.

- Mr. Mesereau's client was charged with felony embezzlement (over \$1,000,000) in state court. A 3-week jury trial ended in a **Hung Jury**.
- Mr. Mesereau represented a celebrity newscaster who had been indicted by a grand jury for securities fraud. After an 11-week jury trial, the trial judge dismissed the case "in the interest of justice," resulting in a complete **Acquittal** for the defendant.
- Mr. Mesereau defended a man facing capital murder charges and the death penalty who the prosecution claimed intentionally shot someone from behind. On the day the jury was to be chosen, the prosecution **Dismissed** the entire case. This resulted in a newspaper editorial condemning false charges against an innocent man, wrongfully charged, who had spend one year in jail awaiting trial.
- Thomas Mesereau defended music legend **Michael Jackson** against conspiracy and child molestation charges. During the trial, Professor Laurie Levenson of [Loyola Law School](#) in Los Angeles called Mr. Mesereau "the best cross-examiner" she had ever seen.
- Tom Mesereau defended a prominent Hollywood **Television Director** who was charged with criminal assault. The client was **Acquitted** of all charges before a Los Angeles jury.
- Mr. Mesereau defended actor **Robert Blake** against charges that Mr. Blake murdered his wife. He was successful in obtaining bail for Mr. Blake in a "murder with special circumstances" case – a result legal experts called impossible. Following the televised preliminary hearing, Court TV commentator Rikki Klieman called Thomas Mesereau ". . . if not the best, one of the best cross-examiners I have ever seen." Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Lloyd Nash, who presided at the Blake preliminary hearing, called Mr. Mesereau "One of the finest lawyers I have ever seen." Tom also obtained a **Dismissal** of the "conspiracy to murder" charge prior to trial.
- Mr. Mesereau **Acquitted** a man who had spent six years on Alabama's death row for a double homicide in **Alabama v. Wesley Quick**. Mr. Quick had been convicted while being represented by another lawyer. This case was tried before a jury in Birmingham, Alabama after a successful appeal.
- Tom Mesereau **Acquitted** a **medical doctor** who was facing health-care fraud charges before a jury in Los Angeles. This physician had been secretly recorded by undercover agents.
- Mr. Mesereau obtained **14 Acquittals** (16-count indictment) for a **hospital manager** accused of immigration law violations in the [United States District Court, Central District of California](#) (Los Angeles). This was a high-profile trial in federal court. The client was placed on probation for the two remaining counts.
- Mr. Mesereau defended a man charged with capital murder who was alleged to be part of a criminal conspiracy engaged in drug-related homicides. He was facing the death penalty. On the

day the trial was to start, the defendant was permitted to plead guilty to a marijuana charge and go home! This was a remarkable result in a death penalty case.

- Thomas Mesereau has won numerous **Acquittals** in sexual assault cases. Examples include the following:

*Firefighter/paramedic charged with sexually assaulting two women in the ambulance during a twenty-hour shift: **Acquitted.***

*Husband/father charged with sexually assaulting daughter's sixteen-year old girlfriend in home: **Acquitted.***

*Swimming instructor at YMCA charged with molesting child/student: **Acquitted.***

Husband/father charged with molesting a child in his garage.

*The child lived across the street and claimed four acts of molestation: **Acquitted.***

*Three hundred and fifteen pound football player charged with raping a college student in her apartment: **Acquitted.***

- Mr. Mesereau defended a Los Angeles man charged with committing murder behind a nightclub in Gardena, California. The claim was self-defense. The jury verdict was **Not Guilty.**
- Mr. Mesereau traveled to Bessemer, Alabama to defend a 24 year-old mother accused of murdering her 22-month old infant daughter in a very high-profile case. She was facing the death penalty. The defense claimed that her drug addicted boyfriend committed the murder. However, the prosecution insisted that she was culpable and that she should be executed. The jury found Mr. Mesereau's client **Not Guilty** of murder and convicted on a lesser charge of manslaughter. Some time later, the boyfriend was convicted of child abuse in a separate case and sentenced to prison.
- In a **three-strikes** case that received media attention, Mr. Mesereau defended a former Los Angeles gang member who was facing a 25-year to life sentence for **drug possession**. Mr. Mesereau had helped his client form a non-profit organization to counsel inner city youth about the dangers of guns, drugs and gangs. The case went to a jury trial in Torrance, California and the verdict was **Not Guilty.** The jury believed that Mr. Mesereau's client had significantly turned his life around and thus was not guilty of felony drug possession.
- Mr. Mesereau traveled to Birmingham, Alabama to defend a homeless black man, who was accused of shooting a beautiful, 21-year old white woman to death during a robbery. He was facing the **death penalty**. This case was the lead story on the evening news in Alabama throughout the trial. Mr. Mesereau was asked by two local white lawyers to assist in this case because they needed help and were receiving death threats. Mr. Mesereau cross-examined all of the witnesses who claimed that they recognized the homeless man as the killer. For the first time in Alabama history, Mr. Mesereau called an eyewitness identification expert to testify about the

inaccuracy of cross-racial identification. The homeless man was **Acquitted** of all counts.

- Mr. Mesereau defended an alleged Los Angeles gang member, who was allegedly known as “Little Hit-Man,”. He was charged with murdering a rival in broad daylight at a major intersection. The prosecution called three eye witnesses who claimed that Mr. Mesereau’s client was the gunman. The defendant had cooperated with the police, requested a lie detector test and was adamant that he was innocent. The verdict was **Not Guilty**. The jury did not believe the prosecution’s witness.
- He defended a former choir member at the First A.M.E. Church, who was charged with murdering her mother, a First A.M.E. Trustee. The prosecution claimed that the murder weapon, a handgun, was located in the dresser drawer of the defendant’s bedroom and that she had repeatedly lied about the facts on a 911 call and to police officers. The first trial resulted in a **Hung Jury**. In a re-trial, the defendant was **Acquitted** of first and second-degree murder. She was convicted on a lesser charge of manslaughter.
- In a remarkable jury **Acquittal**, Mr. Mesereau’s client was cleared of any alleged involvement in a drive-by shooting. Two defendants were chased by police cars and a police helicopter after a shooting. The prosecutors claimed that the passenger had fired numerous shots at a house. The prosecution also claimed that the passenger in the suspect automobile had thrown a canister of bullets over an overpass and threw a pistol on a porch. The canister of bullets and the pistol were introduced as evidence, along with eyewitness testimony. Following the high speed police chase, Mr. Mesereau’s client was arrested. While the driver of the suspect automobile was convicted, Mr. Mesereau’s client, the passenger, was **Acquitted** of all counts. Eight months after Mr. Mesereau’s acquittal, the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office charged the same defendant with two new felonies which allegedly occurred while the defendant was awaiting trial in county jail for the above described drive-by shooting. Mr. Mesereau’s client was **Acquitted** of all counts, again!

Public Service Awards and Accomplishments

Mr. Mesereau has received the following honors and awards:

- Mr. Mesereau was named one of **America’s 100 Most Influential Trial Lawyers** by [The National Trial Lawyers](#) organization.
- [Loyola Law School](#), Los Angeles announced Thomas A. Mesereau, Jr. as the recipient of the **2011 Fidler Institute Award for Excellence in Criminal Defense**
- County of Los Angeles, California, formerly announced the celebration of “**Attorney Thomas Mesereau Day**” – for Mr. Mesereau’s numerous contributions to the underprivileged and civil rights.
- **President’s Award** from [United States Dream Academy](#), Washington D.C. – for work with inner city children whose parents are incarcerated – received with Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton.

- **Community Service Award** from the Honorable Antonio Villaraigosa, Mayor of Los Angeles, California – for years of contributions to the city, including willingness to represent unpopular defendants and commitment to poor citizens.
- **Humanitarian Award** issued in Mr. Mesereau’s name each year by [N-Action Family Network](#), an organization devoted to helping women in drug recovery and their children re-enter society.
- **Award** from the Sarah Allen Women’s Missionary Society of First African Methodist Episcopal Church, Los Angeles – for contributions to the African-American and other minority communities.
- **Eagle Award** from the Honorable John Chiang, California State Controller – for “leadership, vision and outstanding contributions to California”
- **Certificate of Appreciation** from Los Angeles County Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke – for dedicated service to the citizens of Los Angeles County
- **Special Honor Award for Outstanding Lifetime Achievement** from St. Gregory’s College, Lagos, Nigeria – for accomplishments in civil rights.
- **Honored by the Black Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles** for outstanding community contributions through the Mesereau Free Legal Clinic.
- **Sankofa Award** from the National Bar Association – for legal leadership and excellence in civil rights.
- **Humanitarian Award** from the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice – “in recognition of your ongoing commitment to justice for all.”
- **Award** from the Reverend Cecil Murray, former Senior Minister of the First African Methodist Episcopal Church – for the many hours of volunteer time devoted to the church’s free legal clinic.
- **Service Award from Dr. Frederick Ormonde Murph**, Senior Minister, Brookins Community African Methodist Episcopal Church – for civil rights accomplishments.
- **Certificate of Appreciation** from the City of Los Angeles, California – for Mr. Mesereau’s contributions to the annual “Women of Watts Taking our Lives Back March” and his commitment to improving the lives of families in the community – presented by the Honorable Janice Hahn, Councilwoman, 15th District, Los Angeles, California.
- **Commendation** from the District Attorney of Los Angeles County – “in recognition of dedicated community service.”
- **Recognition** by the Honorable Linda T. Sanchez, member of the United States Congress – for “his many years of outstanding and invaluable service to the community.”
- **Commendation** by the 13th Assembly District of the California State Legislature – for “outstanding commitment to providing quality legal services to the people of the State of California.”
- **Certificate of Appreciation** from Sharing Love Ministries Church in south Los Angeles – for Mr. Mesereau’s “active participation in the work of the ministry of Christ.”
- **Formal Commendation** from Compton Seventh Day Adventist Church – for Mr. Mesereau’s time and effort given to pro bono legal services in Los Angeles.
- **Certificate of Appreciation** from the African-American Community Empowerment Organization, Los Angeles, California – for efforts to assist at-risk youth to develop their skills and goals.

- **California School Board President's Award** – for “outstanding contributions to the children of the Compton Unified School District, Los Angeles, California.
- **Award from the State Bar of California, Board of Governors** – for providing pro bono legal services to low-income Californians.
- **Civil Rights Award** from Collier Image Studios – for contributions to the inner city.
- **Morton Herbert Service Award** from Criminal Courts Bar Association of Los Angeles, California – for “his generous and noble service and furtherance of social justice.”
- **Annual Service Award** from [N-Action Family Network](#) – for efforts on behalf of women in drug recovery.
- **Special Honor** from the Human Relations Commission of the City of Los Angeles – for efforts to improve the inner city.
- **Keynote Speaker Award** from the Salvation Army of Compton, California.
- **Special Honor** from the Urban Issues Forum of Greater Los Angeles – for commitment to public discussion of critical urban issues.

Articles

1. [Mesereau, Thomas A. Jr. “Effectively Handling High-Profile and Celebrity Cases.” *Los Angeles Lawyer Magazine* Fall 2009.](#)
2. [Mesereau, Thomas A. Jr. “The Litigation Commentary & Review asks Tom Mesereau 20 Questions.” *Litigation Counsel of America*. November – December 2009.](#)
3. [Mesereau, Thomas A. Jr. “Defending Michael.” *Los Angeles Daily Journal* 1 July 2009.](#)
4. [Mesereau, Thomas A. Jr. “Lights, Camera, Objection!” *The American Trial Lawyer* Fall 2008.](#)
5. [Mesereau, Thomas A. Jr. “The Power of Persuasion.” *Los Angeles Daily Journal* 3 Jan. 2008.](#)
6. [Mesereau, Thomas A. Jr. “Foreword.” *Michael Jackson Conspiracy*. By Aphrodite Jones. Nebraska: Aphrodite Jones Books, 2007.](#)
7. [Mesereau, Thomas A. Jr. “Random Thoughts on Trial Practice.” *American Journal of Trial Advocacy* 31:1 \(Summer 2007\): 115-135.](#)
8. [Mesereau, Thomas A. Jr. “Look at Me.” *Los Angeles Daily Journal* 12 Jan. 2007.](#)
9. [Mesereau, Thomas A. Jr. “Defender Legendary for Second Sight, Sixth Sense.” *Los Angeles Daily Journal* 5 Dec. 2006.](#)
10. [Mesereau, Thomas A. Jr. “Address Racial Prejudice Immediately to Help Jurors Rise Above It.” *Los Angeles Daily Journal* 21 Sept. 2006.](#)
11. [Mesereau, Thomas A. Jr. “Johnnie Cochran’s Humility Moved Mountains” *Los Angeles Daily Journal* 29 Mar. 2006.](#)