

William F. Leo
Forensic Identification Consultant
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Credentials

Master of Science Degree – Criminology

Indiana State University
Emphasis in the areas of criminal law and physical evidence

Bachelor of Science Degree – Criminal Justice with a specialization in Forensic Identification

The Union Institute's College of Undergraduate Studies

Associate of Arts Degree – Administration of Justice

Los Angeles Valley College

Community College Teaching Credential in Police Science

State of California, 1980, Valid for Life

Certified Latent Fingerprint Examiner

International Association for Identification, 1989-2016

Certified Law Enforcement Instructor & Firearms Instructor

Texas Commission on Law Enforcement

Professional Experience

Forensic Identification Consultant

January 2009 to Present

Private Practice -California Licensed Private Investigator #12148
Fingerprint examination, evidence reviews, crime scene investigation and reconstruction, fingerprint examiner training, providing courses in expert witness testimony and print comparison. Appointed as a member of the "Expert Witness Panel" for the Los Angeles Superior Court.

Forensic Identification Specialist II

January 1990 to January 2012

Los Angeles Sheriff's Department - Scientific Services Bureau
Senior latent print examiner and crime scene investigator, section training coordinator and lead instructor in the latent print examiner training program. Appeared as an expert witness in the areas of fingerprint identification and crime scene investigation procedures.

Latent Print Expert

September 1976 to January 1990

Los Angeles Police Department – Scientific Investigation Division
Crime scene investigator and latent print examiner, latent print section training officer, member Disaster Identification Team, latent print instructor at the Los Angeles Police Academy from 1980 to 1990.

Teaching Experience

Adjunct Professor of Criminal Justice

August 2014 to Present

Grayson College and Texoma Regional Police Academy, Denison, Texas
Courses taught include: Crime in America, Criminalistics, Criminal Investigation and Police Recruit and advanced officer courses in Crime Scene Investigation and latent prints through the Texoma Regional Police Academy

Adjunct Instructor – Administration of Justice

1986 to 2012

Rio Hondo Community College and Regional Police Academy, Whittier, California
Courses taught: Crime Scene Investigation, Fingerprint Classification, Advanced Latent Prints, Friction Ridge Comparison, Advanced police video/photography, and Expert Witness Testimony.

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Teaching Experience, Continued

Adjunct Instructor – Administration of Justice January 2008 to December 2009
Chaffey College,
Courses taught: Introduction to Administration of Justice, Criminal Investigation.

Adjunct Instructor – Administration of Justice January 2001 to January 2008
Long Beach City College, California
Taught the course: "Fingerprint Identification and Classification" for fourteen semesters.

Professional Accomplishments

- Authored the textbook, *Court Presentation of Fingerprint Evidence*, 2018, ISBN 9781986703499
- Authored the textbook *Fingerprint Identification*, 2004, LawTech Publishing, ISBN 1889315133, the text has been adopted by various colleges throughout the United States and Canada, and has been on the recommended reading list for board certification by the International Association for Identification.
- Lectured to over 15,000 fingerprint examiners, law enforcement officers, attorneys, and students on latent print identification, the history and scientific foundation of fingerprint identification, crime scene investigation, and expert witness testimony.
- Conducted over 10,000 crime scene investigations, to include in excess of 1,000 major crime scenes involving homicides or officer-involved-shootings.
- In 2009, served as one of two auditors conducting an external quality control audit of the Latent Print Section of a major Southern California law enforcement agency. A number of the recommendations made as a result of the audit were implemented.
- Conducted many thousands of latent print examinations involving hundreds of thousands of individual latent prints.
- Qualified as an expert witness in State and Federal Courts in the areas of fingerprint identification and crime scene investigation in excess of 500 times.
- In 2005, conducted a scientific investigation into a defense expert's allegation of the falsification of latent print evidence. Provided testimony demonstrating why the print was not falsified, clearing the technician and resulting in the conviction of the person leaving the print at the scene of a sexual assault.
- In 1991, conducted a scientific investigation into the possible falsification of fingerprint evidence by an evidence technician which resulted in an indictment of the technician.
- Presented a paper at the International Symposium on Latent Prints at the FBI Academy in 1993 on the difference between distortion and dissimilarity in latent prints.
- As an expert witness, I defended the science of fingerprint identification during the first Daubert challenge of fingerprint evidence in a Federal Civil Court (2nd Daubert challenge in the U.S.) during a civil rights trial, 1999, Central District Court of California.
- As an expert witness, I rebutted the testimony of Law Prof. James Starrs as to the reliability of fingerprint identification evidence in Orange County Superior Court, 2002.
- As an expert witness, I rebutted the testimony of Prof. Simon Cole as to the reliability and scientific foundation of fingerprint evidence, Los Angeles Superior Court, 2003 and 2010.
- Published a number of technical papers on fingerprint identification which have appeared in the "Journal of Forensic Identification", "The California Identification Digest", and "The Print".
- Recipient of the Charles Wolford Award presented by the Southern California Association of Fingerprint Officers for significant contributions to the Association and Profession.
- Featured in the Court Television Documentary "Lady in Cement" North Mission Road Series.

Specialized Training

Forensic Identification

Probability and Fingerprints, An Introduction, 8 hours, 2010
Confirmation Bias in Forensic Identification, 8 hours, 2009
Advanced ACE/V Applications, 40 hours, 2008
Cogent, NEC, & IAFIS workstation training, 40 hours, 2008
Shoe and Tire Impression workshop, 24 hours, 2002
Analysis of Problem Latent Prints, 24 hours, 2000
International Symposium on Latent Prints, FBI Academy, Quantico Va., 40 hours, 1993
Advanced Palm Print Identification Course, 24 hours, 1992
F.B.I. Forensic Photography Course, 40 hours, 1990
Cal-ID Fingerprint Computer Course, 24 hours, 1985
FBI Deceased and Disaster Identification Course, 34 hours, 1980,
Evidence Technician School, Cal. State University at Long Beach, 120 hours, 1978
F.B.I. Advanced Latent Fingerprint School, 40 hours, 1977
L.A.P.D. Latent Print Examiner Apprenticeship, 14 months, 1976-1977

Law Enforcement Tactics

F.B.I. / L.A.S.D. Terrorism workshop, 8 hours, 2005
L.A.S.D. Improvised Devise and Booby Trap Awareness Course, 16 hours, 2004
F.B.I. Firearms Instructor Course, 40 hours, 1979
L.A.P.D. Homicide Investigator's School, 40 hours, 1986
C.S.T.I. Officer Survival Course, 40 hours, 1977
832 P.C. Arrest and Firearms training, 60 hours, 1976
U.S.A.F. Law Enforcement and Security Specialist Courses, 1975

Teaching and Leadership

L.A.S.D. Deputy Leadership Institute, 24 hours, 2002
L.A.S.D. P.O.S.T. Instructor Update Course, 24 hours, 2000
F.B.I. Instructor Development Course, 40 hours, 1979
UCLA Techniques of Teaching, 40 hours, 1979

Military Experience

U.S. Army, Reconnaissance Scout, 1971-1974
California Air National Guard, Staff Sergeant, Security Police, 1974-1980

Selected Articles and Publications

- Court Presentation of Fingerprint Evidence*, Textbook, ISBN 9781986703499
Create Space Publishing, 2018
- Proving Fingerprints Are Unique
The California Identification Digest, July-August 2012
- Model Brief to Support Latent Print Identification
The Print, May 2010
- Fingerprint Identification*, Textbook, ISBN 1889315133
LawTech Publishing, San Clemente, CA., 2004
- “Subjective” - The Misused Word
Journal of Forensic Identification, January/February 2008
- Will DNA Replace Fingerprints in the 21st Century?
The Print, September 2005
- What are the Effects of the Daubert Decision on Fingerprint Identification?
The Print, July 2005
- IAFIS Fingerprint Search Solves 45 Year-Old Double Police Officer Murder
Journal of Forensic Identification, July/August 2003
- Fingerprint Identification; Objective Science or Subjective Opinion?
The Print, January 2001
- Distortion versus Dissimilarity in Friction Skin Identification
Journal of Forensic Identification, March 1998
- Identification Standards - The Quest for Excellence
California Identification Digest, December 1996
- Friction Skin Identification - A Scientific Approach
The Print, March 1994

Selected Presentations

- Advanced Latent Print Training - Preparation for Latent Print Examiner Certification Examination
Three Contract 40 hour courses with the Los Angeles County Regional Identification System, 2014
- Proving Fingerprints are Unique
California State IAI, May 2014, Texas State IAI June 2014, and SCAFO September 2014
- Debate with Dr. Simon Cole on the Admissibility & Reliability of Fingerprint Evidence
Southern California Association of Fingerprint Officers, Ontario, CA, Oct. 2012
- Advance Court Testimony Workshops for Fingerprint Examiners
Given at the Arlington Texas Police Department, May 2011
Four Contract Courses with the Los Angeles County Regional Identification System, 2012
Given at the Austin Texas Police Department, May 2013
Given at the Tacoma Washington Police Department, September 2013
Given at Albany, New York, New York State Office of Forensic Services, March 2019
- Responding to Recent Court Challenges
California State Division, International Association for Identification, Napa, CA, May 2011
Pacific Northwest Division, International Association for Identification, VanCouver, WA. Sept. 2011
Southern California Association for Fingerprint Officers, Ontario, CA October 2011
- The Flawed National Academy Report on “Strengthening” Forensic Science
Southern California Association of Fingerprint Officers, Sept. 2009, Glendale, CA

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Selected Presentations, Continued,

Investigating and Responding to an Allegation of Fingerprint Fabrication

California State Division, International Association for Identification, May 2008, Ontario, CA

The Sky is not Falling, Attacks on Fingerprint Identification in and out of the Courtroom

California State Division, International Association for Identification, May 2006, Ontario, CA

Is it Really Science?, Debate on Fingerprint Evidence, William Leo vs. Law Professor David Faigman

Los Angeles County Bar Association, Criminal Section Evening Seminar, February 2006

The Expert Fingerprint Witness in the World of Ridgeology

California State Division, International Association for Identification, April 2002, Monterey, CA

Defense Expert, Was He Lying or Incompetent?

California State Division, International Association for Identification, May 2000, Laughlin, NV.

Presentation of Fingerprint Evidence

Guest Lecturer, Los Angeles County District Attorney's Trial College, 1995 - 2002

Expert Witness Testimony for Fingerprint Examiners

Series of workshops, Southern California Association of Fingerprint Officers, 1997 - 1998

Identification Protocol

International Association for Identification, Whittier, CA. 1998

Dissimilarities and Distortion in Friction Skin Identification

International Symposium on Latent Prints, FBI Academy 1993

Falsification of Fingerprint Evidence, A Case History

S.C.A.F.O. and C.S.D.I.A.I., seminars, 1992

Developing Latent Prints on Dead Bodies

Southern California Laser Study Group 1992

Identification of Skeletal Remains through Fingerprints, A Case History

International Association for Identification, Sacramento, CA 1988

Professional Affiliations

Member of the Editorial Review Board

The Fingerprint Source book

National Institute of Justice Project, published 2011

Reviewer of Chapter 1, History, and Chapter 13, Fingerprints and the Law

Southern California Association of Fingerprint Officers

1996 President

Distinguished Member Status

Recipient of the Charles Wolford Award

Current Association Historian

International Association for Identification, California State Division

Served on Training & Credential Committee, Board of Directors, 1998 3rd Vice President

International Association for Identification Board Certified Latent Print Examiner, 1989-2016

Member, Texas State Division, IAI

Participating Member, Pattern Evidence Task Force

Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, Forensic Science Section, 2008-2012

03/2019