

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

Professional Experience

Forensic Identification Consultant

January 2009 to Present

Private Practice, California Private Investigator's License # 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 December 2011

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.

Adjunct Instructor – Administration of Justice

1986 to 2012

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

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
Taught the course: "Fingerprint Identification and Classification" for fourteen semesters.

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.

Professional Accomplishments

- 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 is on the recommended reading list for board certification by the International Association for Identification.
- Lectured to over 15,000 fingerprint examiners, law enforcement officers, 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 on 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 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 Concrete” 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, 1980
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, 1974-1979

Selected Articles and Publications

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

Basis of Fingerprint Identification

California Identification Digest, June 1991

Selected Presentations

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

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

Investigating and Responding to an Allegation of Fingerprint Fabrication

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

Selected Presentations, Continued,

- 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

Participating Member, Pattern Evidence Task Force

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