

# Laura A. Zimmerman

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Citizenship: The United States of America

Veterans' Preference: N/A

Federal Civilian Status: N/A

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## PROFILE

A broadly trained experimental psychologist with 5 years of hands-on graduate-level experience in eyewitness interview and identification techniques; knowledge of expertise and expert decision making in critical, high-stakes, time-pressured incidents; academic and field education in local and federal policing practices and policies in the U.S.; development of memory enhancing interview techniques and experience interviewing students and police officers; experience in independently designing and coordinating scientific studies, field and laboratory data collection, protocol development, coding and data processing, statistical analysis, and publication and presentation of results to scientific and general audiences.

## EDUCATION

- Ph.D. 2006 Experimental Psychology, Legal Track, University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso, TX 79968.
- M.A. 2004 Experimental Psychology, University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso, TX 79968.
- B.A. 2001 Psychology, minor in Criminal Justice, San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA 94132.
- Diploma 1984 Lake Oswego High School, Lake Oswego, OR 97034.

## HONORS

- Fellowship, UTEP Graduate School Dodson Fellowship 2005-2006
- Excellence Award for Outstanding Achievement, UTEP Graduate School 2001-2006
- Graduation Cum Laude, San Francisco State University 2001
- Departmental Honors, Psychology, San Francisco State University 2001

## SCIENTIFIC EXPERIENCE

### **POLICE CRITICAL INCIDENT DECISION MAKING EXPERIMENT**

University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso, TX 79968; March 2005 to May 2006, 50 hrs/week, Ph.D. dissertation. Designed, executed, analyzed, documented, presented, and wrote up for publication several studies and articles on how police officers make decisions during critical incidents. Coordinated research and training sessions for officers in multiple law enforcement agencies. Supervised assistants in the field and laboratory. Coordinated training site, role-players (PD and SO SWAT team members), and Simunition® training. Collected observational, interview, and survey data on police activities and decision making processes. Developed and taught a course on critical incident decision-making. Identified components involved in perceiving, processing, and deciding courses of action during critical incidents. Secured a

\$1000 grant from Human Factors and Ergonomics Society and a \$944 grant from UTEP Graduate School. Wrote a grant proposal for National Institute of Justice, Crime and Justice Research (declined). Collaborated with the El Paso County Sheriff's Office Training Academy on course and scenario development. Major Advisor (Supervisor): Dr. Roy S. Malpass, whom you may contact at 915-539-0510.

### **EYEWITNESS INTERVIEWING USING GUIDED MEMORY TECHNIQUES**

University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso, TX 79968; June 2003 to May 2004, 50 hrs/week, M.A. thesis. Designed, executed, analyzed, documented, presented, and submitted for publication an empirical study on eyewitness interview techniques. Supervised assistants in the laboratory. Coordinated simulated scenarios and role-players. Designed and constructed interview techniques and trained interviewers. Collected and analyzed eyewitness descriptions of a live simulated event. Designed, constructed, and analyzed a follow-up study on eyewitness descriptions given in second languages of own- and other-race perpetrators. Secured a \$500 grant from American Psychology-Law Society.

### **SIMULTANEOUS AND SEQUENTIAL LINEUP PROJECTS**

University of Texas at El Paso, TX 79968; November 2001 to December 2005, variable hours overlapping with projects above. Designed, executed, analyzed, documented, presented, and published empirical studies on the effects of various lineup presentation methods on eyewitness identification rates and accuracy. Supervised assistants in the laboratory. Collected and analyzed data comparing suspect photo-lineup presentation methods (simultaneous and sequential) and photo administration methods (paper and computerized). Collaborated with researchers on the development of a computerized lineup program (PC\_Eyewitness). Designed, analyzed and supervised data processing of field data collected during a program evaluation of lineup techniques conducted at Illinois police departments. Collaborated with researchers to make policy recommendations based on police report data.

### **SFPD LAPTOP EVALUATION PROJECT**

San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA 94132; January 2000 to May 2001, 20 hrs/week. Processed and analyzed data on the use of laptop computers in police cars. Wrote data analysis manual and developed data processing forms. Conducted field research by riding along with and recording the activities of patrol officers during their regular shifts. This program evaluation project was funded by National Institute of Justice, PI: Dr. Caran Colvin.

### **VICTIMIZATION AND AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR**

San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA 94132; September 2000 to May 2001, 10 hrs/week, Undergraduate thesis. Designed, executed, analyzed, documented, and presented an empirical study on the influence of victimization on aggression in adult males and females.

## **INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE**

*Intern, Training Academy*

*2004-2005*

*El Paso County Sheriff's Office, El Paso, TX*

Constructed and evaluated student course surveys for all peace officer in-service and cadet training courses. Constructed and taught a study workshop for cadets. Constructed and taught a course on eyewitness description and identification methods. Attended a 40-hour police

interview and interrogation course. Attended a 40-hour basic instructor course and obtained peace officer instructor certification from the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education. Attended Simunition® traffic stop training courses. Wrote and submitted a research grant to the National Institute of Justice. Collaborated with academy personnel to develop critical incident decision making training and research.

*Intern, Victim Witness Assistance Program* 2000-2001  
*San Francisco District Attorney's Office, Juvenile Division, San Francisco, CA*

Contacted victims and witnesses to crimes and assisted with obtaining financial and legal assistance. Accompanied victims/witnesses to court and informed victims/witnesses of case progress. Developed forms to track demographic and case data on crimes, perpetrators, and victims. Attended meetings to develop assistance programs for female juvenile offenders.

*Intern, Alternative Sentencing Residential & Outpatient Treatment Program* 1999-2000  
*Milestones Human Services, Inc., San Francisco, CA*

Administered Addiction Severity Index (ASI) surveys to parolees sentenced to an alternative drug treatment program. Attended offender group counseling sessions. Visited detention facility drug treatment programs. Developed archival research procedures.

## SKILLS

### **Field:**

- Experimental, field, and archival study design.
- Preparation of police reports for data processing and analysis.
- Taking notes on police officer activities in real-time.
- Interviewing police officers in the field.
- Conducting decision making training and evaluating performance.
- Program evaluation planning and implementation.

### **Laboratory:**

- Creating simulated scenarios.
- Training role-players, interviewers, and research assistants.
- Supervising undergraduate thesis projects.
- Conducting and supervising experimental sessions with human subjects.
- Administering research stimuli using various multi-media methods (simulations, video, computerized, paper).
- Transcribing interviews from digital recordings to typewritten documents.
- Coding and analyzing interviews, observational data (video) and surveys.
- Writing syntax (SPSS) for input and organization of variables.

### **Computer:**

- Windows and Macintosh operating systems.
- Word processing (e.g. MS Word, Adobe Acrobat).
- Presentation & poster creation (e.g. MS PowerPoint).
- Data management (e.g. MS Excel).
- Image manipulation (e.g. Adobe Photoshop).
- Computerized lineup administration (PC\_Eyewitness).

### **Statistics:**

- Statistics programs (e.g. SPSS, Nu\*dist).
- Basic statistical analysis (e.g. ANOVA, ANCOVA, Repeated measures ANOVA, Regression).

- Nonparametric tests and multiway frequency analysis (e.g. Chi-Square, Hierarchical Loglinear Analysis).
- Qualitative analysis (e.g. content analysis).

**Writing:**

- Writing of grants, scientific publications, book and article reviews, study protocols.
- Writing of course curriculum and lectures.
- Contributing author to *Encyclopedia of Applied Psychology*.
- Reviewing of manuscripts for *Law and Human Behavior*.

**Public Speaking:**

- Organizing and running of a workshop on SPSS operating procedures.
- Certification as a Law Enforcement Academy Instructor.
- Teaching of numerous academic courses, including Introduction to Psychology, Experimental Psychology: Research Methods, Social Psychology.
- Teaching of numerous law enforcement classes, including Critical Incident Decision Skills Training, Eyewitness Interviewing and Identification, Cultural Diversity, Memory Enhancement and Study Techniques Workshop.
- Numerous formal presentations to scientific peers.
- Lecturing at an invited seminar at the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association.
- Lecturing to law students from Mexico on eyewitness evidence collection procedures.
- Lecturing to students on victimization issues and on mental illness and criminal behavior.

**MEMBERSHIPS**

- American Psychological Association joined in 2000
- American Psychology-Law Society (Division 41, APA) joined in 2001
- Human Factors and Ergonomics Society joined in 2005
- Society for Applied Research in Memory and Cognition joined in 2003
- Society for Judgment and Decision Making joined in 2005
- Society for Personality and Social Psychology joined in 2003

**PRESENTATIONS AT SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS**

- American Psychology & Law Society 2006, 2005, 2004, 2002
- 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Naturalistic Decision Making 2005
- Annual International Eyewitness Memory Conference 2004, 2003
- International Psychology & Law Society 2003
- Society for Applied Research in Memory and Cognition 2003
- 4<sup>th</sup> Annual NIJ National Conference on Science and the Law 2002

**PUBLICATIONS**

- **Zimmerman, L. A.** (in preparation). *Law Enforcement Decision Making During Critical Incidents: A Three-Pronged Approach to Understanding and Enhancing Law Enforcement Decision Processes.*
- **Zimmerman, L.A.** (in preparation). Naturalistic decision making in law enforcement environments: An assessment of experienced and novice police officer decision processes.

- **Zimmerman, L. A.**, Rigoni, M. E., Luna, A. H., & Malpass, R. S. (in preparation). The influence of ethnicity and language on facial descriptions: A comparison of monolingual and bilingual Hispanics.
- Malpass, R. S., MacLin, O. H., Tredoux, C. G., McQuiston-Surrett, D. E., **Zimmerman, L. A.**, & Topp, L. D. (under review). Study Space Analysis for Policy Development: Simultaneous vs. Sequential Lineups. Submitted to *Psychology, Public Policy and Law*.
- **Zimmerman, L. A.** (under review). Research examining police officers as eyewitnesses: Do police describe and identify criminal perpetrators better than civilians? Submitted to *Law and Human Behavior*.
- **Zimmerman, L. A.** & Malpass, R. S. (under review). The influence of guided memory and structured interview techniques on eyewitness verbal descriptions after short and long delays. Submitted to *Applied Cognitive Psychology*.
- **Zimmerman, L. A.**, Malpass, R. S., & MacLin, O. H. (under review). Unconfounding the simultaneous vs. sequential comparison. Submitted to *Journal of Applied Psychology*.
- MacLin, M. K., **Zimmerman, L. A.**, Meissner, C. A., MacLin, O. H., Tredoux, C. G., & Malpass, R. S. (in press). The science of collecting eyewitness evidence: A collaborative effort between researchers and law enforcement. *Police Practice and Research: An international Journal*.
- MacLin, O. H., Meissner, C. A., & **Zimmerman, L. A.** (2005). PC\_Eyewitness: A computerized framework for the administration and practical application of research in eyewitness psychology. *Behavior Research Methods*, 37, 324-334.
- MacLin, O. H., **Zimmerman, L. A.**, & Malpass, R. S. (2005). PC\_Eyewitness and the sequential superiority effect: Computer based lineup administration. *Law and Human Behavior*, 29, 303-321.
- Malpass, R. S., **Zimmerman, L. A.**, Meissner, C. A., Ross, S. J., Rigoni, M. E., Topp, L. D., Pruss, N., Tredoux, C. T., & Leyva, J. M. (2005). Eyewitness memory and identification. *The San Antonio Defender*, 7 (1), 2-13.
- **Zimmerman, L.A.** (2005). Decision making in ill-defined tasks: Book review: Psychological Investigations of Competence in Decision Making. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 19, 816-819.
- Tredoux, C. G., Meissner, C. A., Malpass, R. S., & **Zimmerman, L. A.** (2004). Eyewitness identification. In C. Spielberger, s (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Applied Psychology* (pp. 875-887). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- **Zimmerman, L. A.** (2004). Recent research: Effects of stress on police and citizen eyewitnesses. *The Canadian Journal of Police and Security Services*, 1 (4), 377-380.
- **Zimmerman L. A.** (2004). Book review: Understanding police and police work: Psychosocial issues. *The Canadian Journal of Police and Security Services*, 2 (1), 58-61.