

LAURA SHEPARD (FERGUSON), PHD

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EXPERIENCE

Principal Historian and Founder

2024–Present

TIME + PLACE HISTORICAL RESEARCH

BEND, OR

- Partners with museums, cultural organizations, design firms, and universities to tell stories that are engaging and memorable for visitors
- Conducts original historical research, develops interpretive content, and writes accessible reports
- Collaborates with communities, stakeholders, and subject matter experts to ensure their stories and perspectives are authentically represented

Historical Consultant

2023–2024

SELF-EMPLOYED

BEND, OR

- Conducted original research on the history of Chinese Oregonians, resulting in a comprehensive report that shed light on tools of oppression and resistance
- Collaborated with partners to fulfill their larger project goals, including offering recommendations on how to tell a multilayered history that illuminates multiple perspectives

Senior Curator of Western History

2019–2022

Curator of Western History

2015–2019

HIGH DESERT MUSEUM

BEND, OR

- Developed, researched, and collaborated with colleagues to create exhibitions on historical and interdisciplinary topics with the goal of highlighting the stories and lived experiences of many different communities
- Project manager for the first phase of developing an exhibition on the Indigenous Plateau, which included facilitating numerous meetings with a team of Native and non-Native knowledge holders, academics, and museum professionals with the goal of centering our partners' vision of and goals for the exhibition
- Led staff members and volunteers through mentorship and collaborative problem solving
- Gave public presentations on numerous topics and coordinated dynamic programs that appealed to diverse audiences

- Researched the objects in the museum's care and contributed to developing longterm plans for the collection

Visiting Assistant Professor

2013–2015

WHITMAN COLLEGE, DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Walla Walla, WA

- Designed and taught courses on U.S. history that presented complex ideas in an engaging manner
- Worked with students to develop their research, writing, and analytical skills
- Completed major research projects entailing the collection, organization, and interpretation of a variety of sources

Postdoctoral Fellow and Lecturer

2012–2013

EISENBERG INSTITUTE FOR HISTORICAL STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Ann Arbor, MI

- Engaged in historical research and taught an upper-division course of my own design

American History Adviser

2009–2013

CALIFORNIA HISTORY-SOCIAL SCIENCE PROJECT, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Berkeley, CA

- Led professional-development workshops for teachers on how to locate historical sources, design inquiry-based lesson plans, and use technological tools to manage and share resources

Project Manager

2004–2005

KELLY LAW REGISTRY

Washington, DC

- Served as the liaison between clients in the legal industry and contract employees
- Secured services from vendors for worksites, oversaw billing and invoicing, and managed timekeeping for contract employees

SELECTED PROJECTS AND EXHIBITIONS

- Exhibit Content Developer/Writer, Arbor Day Farm (via Dimensional Innovations), *Tree Adventure Pavilion* (permanent exhibit), 2025–Present
- Exhibit Content Developer/Writer, Sabetha History Center (via Dimensional Innovations), permanent exhibit, 2024–2026
- Exhibit Content Developer/Writer, Department of Clark County Parks and Recreation, *Empowered: Women of Clark County* (online exhibit), 2024–2025
- Curator, High Desert Museum, *Imagine a World* (temporary exhibit), 2022
- Curator, High Desert Museum, *Carrying Messages: Native Runners, Ancestral Homelands and Awakening* (temporary exhibit), 2021–2022

- Co-curator, High Desert Museum, *Daredevils* (temporary exhibit), 2020–2021
- Co-curator, High Desert Museum, *Infinite Moment: Burning Man on the Horizon* (temporary exhibit), 2020
- Co-curator, High Desert Museum, *Desert Reflections: Water Shapes the West* (temporary exhibit), 2019 — recipient, Western Museums Association's Charles Redd Center for Western Studies Award for Exhibition Excellence
- Curator, High Desert Museum, *Moon Country: Oregon and the Space Race* (temporary exhibit), 2019
- Curator, High Desert Museum, *Ascent: Climbing Explored* (temporary exhibit), 2018
- Curator, High Desert Museum, *World War II: The High Desert Home Front* (temporary exhibit), 2017
- Co-curator, High Desert Museum, *Art for a Nation: Inspiration from the Great Depression* (temporary exhibit), 2016

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

Earlier presentations and publications appear under my former name, Ferguson.

Michael Lewis (presenter), Laura Shepard (presenter), Chelsea Rose, and Briece Edwards, "Seven Decades on Main Street: Hidden Histories of Oregon City's Chinese Community," Public presentation, Portland Chinatown Museum, Portland, Oregon, November 2025.

Laura Ferguson (presenter), Michael Lewis, Chelsea Rose, and Briece Edwards, "Táng rén jiē, 唐人街 khapa tēm wata (Chinatown at Willamette Falls): Co-illuminating Oregon City's multilayered history through Chinese Diasporic and Grand Ronde Tribal frameworks," Paper presentation, Northwest Anthropological Conference, Portland, Oregon, March 2025.

"Make Space (and Time) for Valuing and Engaging Diverse Partners," Panel moderator, Oregon Heritage Conference, Forest Grove, Oregon, April 2024.

"Bringing Burning Man to the High Desert Museum," Public presentation, Deschutes Public Library, Bend, Oregon, May 2020.

"Moon Country: Oregon and the Space Race," Public presentation, Deschutes Public Library, Bend, Oregon, April 2019.

"By Her Hand: Native American Women, Their Art, and the Photographs of Edward S. Curtis," Presentation, High Desert Museum, Bend, Oregon, September 2018.

Ferguson, Laura. "A Gateway without a Port: Making the San Francisco Waterfront," *Journal of Urban History* 44, no. 4 (July 2018): 603-624.

"The Fight for a Farmer's Market: A Hundred Years of Produce and Politics," Public presentation, Deschutes Historical Museum, Bend, Oregon, July 2017.

- "A Historian's Look at Sherman Alexie's Reservation Blues," Presentation to the First-Year Class on the 2014 Summer Read Book, Whitman College, Walla Walla, Washington, September 2014.
- "The Shifting Shoreline: Efforts to reclaim and control San Francisco's waterfront during the mid-nineteenth century," Paper presentation, Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia, April 2014.
- "Whose waterfront?: The Fight for a Farmers' Market on the San Francisco Docks," Paper presentation, American Historical Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., January 2014.
- "The Story of the Navajo Blanket," American Indian Association, Whitman College, Walla Walla, Washington, November 2013.
- "The Search for Gold Mountain: Chinese Immigration, Identity, and Citizenship," Teaching American History, Berkeley, California, June 2012. Also presented at the Oakland Museum of California, August 2011.
- "America's Gateway: Creating and Contesting San Francisco's Waterfront Landscape at the end of the Nineteenth Century," Paper presentation, Western History Association Annual Meeting, Incline Village, Nevada, October 2010.

EDUCATION

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Ph.D. in history, 2012

Oregon State University, University Honors College, Corvallis, B.S. in history, Summa cum laude, 2004

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND SERVICE

Tamástslikt Trust Board, Tamástslikt Cultural Institute	2026–Present
Professional Development Team, Independent Museum Professionals	2024–Present
Editorial Advisory Board, <i>Oregon Historical Quarterly</i>	2017–Present
Oregon Heritage Commission, State of Oregon	2016–2024