Paul A. Christensen

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Current position

2020- Associate Professor of Anthropology with tenure, Department of Humanities, Social Sciences, and the Arts, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology

Previous positions

2014-20 Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Department of Humanities, Social Sciences, and the Arts, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology

2011-14 Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, Union College

2008-11 Lecturer, Department of Anthropology, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

Education

2010 Ph.D., Anthropology, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa
Dissertation title: *The Fragility of Sobriety: Alcoholism and Masculinity in Japan*, Dr. Christine R. Yano, chair

2004 MA, Anthropology, San Francisco State University

2000 BA, Anthropology, University of Washington, minor field: Japanese language

Research interests and expertise

- Unhoused advocacy and housing first policies
- Psychoactive substance use and recovery - particularly as applied to alcoholism
- Theories of substance use and recovery - particularly as applied to the body
- Gender and masculinity
- Geographic areas: Japan, Hawai‘i, Brazil

Books

2027 *Fraught Futures: Hope, Connection, and the Unhoused across Tokyo*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

2015 *Alcoholism, Masculinity, and Japan: Suffering Sobriety in Tokyo*. New York: Lexington Books.

Peer-reviewed publications

2026 ‘Fraught Narratives, Contrived Futures: Tokyo’s Techno-Utopian Erasure of the Unhoused.’ *Japanese Studies,* https://doi.org/10.1080/10371397.2026.2728962.

2026 '"The birthrate's declining! Create an environment where women can give birth and work afterwards!": Survey data about gender (in)equality as a (non)pressing issue in Japan' (with Charles Crabtree, Tom Le, Charles T. McClean, Lauren McKee, and Cindi SturtzSreetharan). *Japan Forum*, 1-27. https://doi.org/10.1080/09555803.2026.2639984

2025 'The Fictitious Shine of Japan's Future.' *Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus.* Volume 23, e8. https://doi.org/10.1017/apj.2025.10

2025 'Selective Development Goals: Examining Japan's SDG Implementation Gaps' (first author with Cindi SturtzSreetharan, Charles Crabtree, Charles T. McClean). *Social Science Journal Japan*. Volume 28, Issue 2. https://doi.org/10.1093/ssjj/jyaf021

2021 'Symptomatic Trauma: Japan, Drug Addiction, and the Limits of Treatment.' *Social Science Japan Journal* Volume 24, Issue 2. https://doi.org/10.1093/ssjj/jyab025

2020 'Fake Meets Soul: Division Among Hawai'i's Japanese Surfers.' *Journal of Sport and Social Issues.* https://doi.org/10.1177/0193723519898704

2018 'Non-National Bodies in a National Pass Time: Japan, Baseball, and the Manufacturing of Difference.' *Japanese Studies* Volume 38, Issue 1. https://doi.org/10.1080/10371397.2018.1435995

2017 'Scripting addiction, constraining recovery: Alcoholism and ideology in Japan.' *Japanese Studies* Volume 37, Issue 3, pages 371-385. https://doi.org/10.1080/10371397.2017.1395689

2017 'The Program is Perfect: Narcotics Anonymous and the Managing of the American Addict.' *Medicine Anthropology Theory* Volume 4, Issue 5. doi.org/10.17157/mat.4.5.319

2014 'Connoisseurship and drunkenness in Tokyo.' *International Journal of Drug Policy*, Volume 25, Issue 4. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugpo.2014.06.010

2012 'The Burden of Sobriety: Alcoholism and Masculinity in Japan.' *Pan Japan: The International Journal of the Japanese Diaspora*. Blai Gaurne and Paul Hansen ed. Special Edition, Escaping Japan: Outside, Volume 8, Issue 2.

2012 'Darvish in Texas: *Haafu* identity and athletic celebrity,' *Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus,* Volume 10, Issue 44, No. 2. http://japanfocus.org/-Paul-Christensen/3850

2012 'Real Men Don't Hold Their Liquor: The Performance of Drunkenness and Sobriety in Japan.' *Social Science Japan Journal*, Volume 15, Issue 2. https://www.jstor.org/stable/23260762

2010 'Struggles with Sobriety: Alcoholics Anonymous Membership in Japan.' *Ethnology*, Volume 49, Issue 1.

Book Chapters

2027 ‘Sporting Bodies.’ Under contract for *Handbook of the Body, Culture and Society in Modern Japan*. London: Springer.

2027 ‘Sake Viva?: Alcohol’s Evolving Role in Japanese Life.’ Under contract for *Research Handbook on Alcohol and Society*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

2017 ‘The Burden of Sobriety: Alcoholism and Masculinity in Japan.’ In *Escaping Japan: Reflections on Estrangement and Exile in the Twenty-First Century***,** edited by Blai Guarne and Paul Hansen. London: Routledge Japan Anthropology Workshop Series.

2017 ‘Darvish in Texas: Hafu Identity and Athletic Celebrity.’ In *Hapa Japan: Identities and Representations*, edited by Duncan Ryuken Williams. Los Angeles: USC Ito Center/Kaya Press.

Other publications

2026 ‘If Japan Is The Future, Why Aren’t We More Upset?’ *Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus.* https://apjjf.org/2026/1/christensen

2025 ‘Tokyo’s Shining, Segregated Future (or why “redevelopment” destroys public space and fuels exclusionary endeavors)’ *The Diplomat.* https://thediplomat.com/2025/02/tokyos-shining-segregated-future/

2024 ‘Jingu Gaien Redevelopment Sparks Outrage in Tokyo. It the Backlash Too Little, Too Late?’ *The Diplomat.* https://thediplomat.com/2024/01/jingu-gaien-redevelopment-sparks-outrage-in-tokyo-is-the-backlash-too-little-too-late/

2023 ‘The hypocrisy of Japan’s punitive drug policy.’ *East Asia Forum* https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2023/04/04/the-hypocrisy-of-japans-punitive-drug-policy/

2021 ‘Japan’s Lessons for the World: Robots Won’t Save Us. Rethinking Japan’s global relevance in the 21st century.’ *The Diplomat* https://thediplomat.com/2021/12/japans-lesson-for-the-world-robots-wont-save-us/

2020 ‘Editorial,’ Treating Addictions: On Failures, Harms, and Hopes of Success, *Journal of Extreme Anthropology.* `

2015 ‘Battle of Okinawa’s legacy lives on 70 years later as locals chafe against Japanese rule, US arms.’ *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/battle-of-okinawas-legacy-lives-on-70-years-later-as-locals-chafe-against-japanese-rule-us-arms-39357

2013 ‘Surfing: Polynesian Origins of Sport.’ *Area Studies Series: Hawai‘i*. M. Yamamoto and T. Yamada eds. Tokyo: Akashi Publications [in Japanese]. (ポリネシア発祥のスポーツ：サーフィン」山本真鳥・山田亨編『ハワイを知るための60章』明石書店)

2009 ‘The Hawai‘i Student Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Use Study: 2007-2008 Comprehensive Report.’ Submitted to the State of Hawai‘i, Department of Health, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division, ASO Log #09-061. Co-authored with Goebert, D. (first author), Nishimura, S., Onoye, J., Boyd, E., and Rehuher, D.

2004 ‘Selected Identities: Ethnic Identity Construction Among the New Japanese Immigrants to the San Francisco Bay Area.’ Masters Thesis, San Francisco State University. Dr. Bernard Wong, chair.

2003 ‘Japanese Female Professionals in the San Francisco Bay Area: Gender Based Discrimination in a Globalized World.’ *The Treganza Anthropology Museum Papers III*, San Francisco State University.

Book reviews

2024 Review of Klaus K.Y. Hammering’s *Perilous Wagers: Gambling, Dignity, and Day Laborers in Twenty-First-Century Tokyo* (Cornell University Press 2024). *Japanese Studies*. https://doi.org/10.1080/10371397.2024.2427596

2024 Review of Judith Vitale, Oleg Benesch, and Miriam Kingsberg Kadia’s *Drugs and the Politics of Consumption in Japan* (Brill 2023). *Japanese Studies.* https://doi.org/10.1080/10371397.2024.2374474

2020 Review of Akiko Takeuchi-Demirci’s *Contraceptive Diplomacy: Reproductive Politics and Imperial Ambitions in the United States and Japan* (Stanford University Press 2018). *Pacific Affairs*, 93(1), 185-187.

2018 Review of Claire D. Clark’s *The Recovery Revolution: The Battle Over Addiction Treatment in the United States* (Columbia University Press 2017). *Medicine Anthropology Theory,* doi.org/10.17157/mat.5.1.588.

2017 Review of Matthew Marr’s *Better Must Come: Exiting Homelessness in Two Global Cities* (Cornell University Press 2015). *Social Science Japan Journal*, volume 21, issue 1.

2015 Review of Wolfram Manzenreiter’s *Sport and Body Politics in Japan* (Routledge 2014). *Asia Pacific World*, volume 6, issue 1.

Honors, grants, awards, and media appearances

2024 Global Asahi, “‘Drinking parties symbolize the problem of gender discrimination,” commentary by an American scholar who studied Japan's drinking culture’ (「飲み会は男女差別の問題を象徴」日本の飲酒文化を研究したアメリカの学者が指摘) https://globe.asahi.com/article/15372332

2024 Mansfield Podcasts Season 2 - https://mansfieldfdn.org/blog/mansfield-podcast-season-2-the-u-s-japan-network-for-the-future/

2024 Northeast Asia Council Distinguished Speakers Bureau Award, hosting Dr. Sam Yamashita's public presentation of "Did the War With Japan Have to End As It Did?"

2022-24 The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation U.S.-Japan Network for the Future, Sixth Cohort - https://mansfieldfdn.org/program/strengthening-government-and-expert-networks/u-s-japan-network-for-the-future/network-participants/

2023 Asahi Shinbun Podcasts - https://www.asahi.com/special/podcasts/item/?itemid=85ebf18e-a83a-4627-8c08-b06e0064bb8f&page=1&iref=pc_special_podcasts&pgid=akiyamanoriko

2021-22 Fulbright US Scholar - used for fieldwork in Tokyo ($50,000)

2016 Northeast Asia Council Distinguished Speakers Bureau Award, hosting Dr. William Kelly's public presentation of "Is Japan a Lost Cause or a Sustainable Model?"

2016 Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology Dean's Award for Academic Research ($3,500)

2016 ASIANetwork Teddy Amoloza conference travel award, October 2015. ($500)

2015 New Books Network *Japan, Alcoholism, and Masculinity* https://newbooksnetwork.com/paul-a-christensen-japan-alcoholism-and-masculinity-suffering-sobriety-in-tokyo-lexington-books-2014

2013 Union College Faculty Research Fund - used for fieldwork in São Paulo, Brazil, December 2013 ($3,000)

2013 American Anthropological Association Leadership Fellow ($500)

2012 Northeast Asia Council Japan Studies Grant (NEAC) for Short-term Research Travel to Japan, summer 2012 ($2,700)

2011 Union College Faculty Research Fund - used for fieldwork in Japan, summer 2012. ($4,000)

2010 Department of Anthropology Graduate Scholarship, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. ($1,000)

2010 Dai Ho Chun Fund for Graduate Fellowships, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. ($1,200)

2009-10 Center for Japanese Studies at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, Dissertation Completion Fellowship. ($5,000)

2009 Center for Japanese Studies at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, Graduate Student Travel Award. ($1,000)

2007-08 Monbukagakusho Research Scholarship, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, used for dissertation fieldwork in Tokyo. (tuition and stipend)

2007 College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa travel grant. ($1,000)

2005-06 William P. Lebra Memorial Scholarship, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. ($3,000)

2004 California Pre-Doctoral Research Grant, San Francisco State University. ($5,000)

2003-04 California Pre-Doctoral Fellowship, San Francisco State University. ($3,000)

Research experience

2022- Ongoing work on outreach and advocacy for the unhoused in Tokyo.

2016-19 Fieldwork in Tokyo with the Drug Addiction Rehabilitation Center.

2013-16 Fieldwork in São Paulo and Tokyo with Japanese-Brazilian baseball players.

2010-11 Field research with the Hawai‘i Meth Project in Honolulu.

2008-09 Data analysis at the Alcohol Research Center of Hawai‘i, division of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa.

2007-08 Dissertation field research in Tokyo on alcoholism and alcohol support groups.

2006-07 Survey and interview data collection throughout O‘ahu on attitudes towards alcohol consumption among Japanese, Native Hawaiian, Caucasian and Filipino residents, project sponsored by the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa.

2004 Field research in Honolulu and throughout O‘ahu on Japanese surfing communities and patterns of identity construction.

2002-04 Field research in San Francisco and Japan on migration and identity construction within the Japanese community of the San Francisco Bay Area.

Conference and workshop presentations

3/ 2027 ‘State Power, Communities, and Everyday Resistance: New Books and Methodologies in China and Japan Studies’ Roundtable organized for the Association for Asian Studies annual meeting in Boston, Massachusetts.

11/ 2026 ‘Witnessing Collapse’ Roundtable organized for the American Anthropological Association annual meeting in St. Louis, Missouri.

7/2026 ‘What’s in a Number? Japan and the “Solving” of Homelessness’ at the Asian Studies Conference Japan in Tokyo, Japan.

11/2025 ‘Future phantoms and material erasure: How the unhoused are erased in renderings of Japan’s utopian future’ at the American Anthropological Association annual meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana.

7/2025 ‘Fraught Futures: Connection and the Unhoused across Tokyo’ at the Shaping Futures: East Asia as Practice conference in Seoul, South Korea.

3/2025 ‘Do Tokyo and Beijing see the same way?: Considering surveillance practices and the management of public space in divergent contexts.’ Roundtable at the Association for Asian Studies annual meeting in Columbus, Ohio.

10/2024 ‘Fraught Narratives, Contrived Futures: Connection and the Unhoused across Tokyo,’ at the Imagined Futures in Japan and Beyond workshop, German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ) in Tokyo. Recording of presentation available here.

3/2024 ‘NPO Japan and the commercialization of vulnerability,’ at the Association for Asian Studies annual meeting in Seattle, Washington.

11/2023 ‘*Onigiri,* tactile kindness, and the weight of symbolic association’ at the American Anthropological Association annual meeting in Toronto, Ontario.

9/2023 ‘Symptomatic Trauma: Japan, Drug Addiction, and the Limits of Treatment’ at the Contemporary Drug Problems conference in Paris, France.

11/2022 ‘Vulnerability, dignity, and the contested struggle for the future in Tokyo’ at the American Anthropological Association annual meeting in Seattle, Washington.

11/2021 ‘Symptomatic Trauma: Japan, Drug Addiction, and the Limits of Treatment’ at the American Anthropological Association annual meeting in Baltimore, Maryland.

4/2019 ‘Managing addicted bodies: Narcotics and recovery in Tokyo’ at the Japan Anthropology Workshop (JAWS) meeting in Aarhus, Denmark.

11/2018 ‘Questioning success in addiction “recovery”: Japan and the hypocrisies of prevailing treatment modalities’ at the American Anthropological Association annual meeting in San Jose, California.

11/2016 ‘Non-National Bodies in a National Pass-time: Japan, Baseball, and the Manufacturing of Difference’ at the American Anthropological Association annual meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

4/2016 ‘Scripting Addiction, Constraining Recovery: Alcoholism and Ideology in Japan,’ at the Association for Asian Studies annual meeting in Seattle, Washington.

3/2016 ‘Scripting Addiction, Constraining Recovery: Alcoholism and Ideology in Japan,’ at the ASIANetwork Annual Conference in St. Petersburg, Florida.

11/2015 ‘The Program is Perfect: Narcotics Anonymous and the Managing of the American Addict,’ at the American Anthropological Association annual meeting in Denver, Colorado.

12/2014 ‘Tokyo alcoholics and the pursuit of a “good place,”’ at the American Anthropological Association annual meeting in Washington DC.

9/2014 ‘The Burden of Sobriety: Alcoholism and Masculinity in Japan,’ at the First International Conference on Men and Masculinities, Izmir, Turkey.

11/2013 ‘Denial and danger: Alcoholism and public space in Tokyo,’ at the American Anthropological Association annual meeting in Chicago, Illinois.

3/2013 ‘Darvish in Texas: *Haafu* identity and athletic celebrity,’ at the Japan Anthropology Workshop annual meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

7/2012 ‘TEPCO, you have a problem: The Fukushima meltdown through an alcoholic lens,’ at the Asian Studies Conference Japan, Tokyo, Japan.

11/2011 ‘You’re an Alcoholic!: Diagnosis, Acceptance, and Resistance in Japan,’ at the American Anthropological Association annual meeting in Montréal, Quebec.

11/2010 ‘The Circulation of Alcoholism in Japan,’ at the American Anthropological Association annual meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana.

3/2010 ‘Real men don’t hold their liquor: The performance of drunkenness in Japan,’ at the Japan Anthropology Workshop annual meeting in Austin, Texas.

11/2009 ‘Without a Masculine Manual: Alcoholism and advertisements in Japan,’ at the American Anthropological Association annual meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

11/2007 ‘Rules outside rules: Alcohol and the consequences of deviation from sanctioned patterns of consumption in Japan,’ at the Anthropology of Japan in Japan annual meeting in Tokyo, Japan.

3/2007 ‘(De)Classified Drinking: Alcohol, masculinity and modern Japan,’ at the Japan Anthropology Workshop annual meeting in Oslo, Norway.

3/2004 ‘Fake meets Soul: Division among Hawai‘i’s Japanese surfers,’ at the Anthropology of Japan in Japan annual meeting in Tokyo, Japan.

Invited lectures and colloquia

Fraught Futures: Hope, Connection, and the Unhoused across Tokyo book talk

8/2026 Federal University of Rio de Janeiro
9/2026 University of Southern California
10/2026 Arizona State University

10/2023 ‘Symptomatic Trauma: Japan, Drug Addiction, and the Limits of Treatment,’ Center for East Asian & Pacific Studies, University of Illinois.

10/2021 Missouri Southern State University Japan Semester - four invited lectures over two days.

9/2018 ‘Alcoholism and Masculinity in Japan,’ 2018-19 Jackson Bailey Memorial Lecture at Earlham College.

2/2017 ‘Suffering Sobriety: Alcoholism and Masculinity in Japan,’ Center for Japanese Studies Noon Lecture Series, University of Michigan.

4/2015 ‘Suffering Sobriety: Alcoholism and Masculinity in Japan,’ Masculinities Colloquium Series, Butler University.

2/2015 ‘Suffering Sobriety: Alcoholism and Masculinity in Japan,’ East Asian Studies Center, Indiana University.

3/2013 ‘Suffering Sobriety: Alcoholism and Masculinity in Japan,’ Reischauer Institute for Japanese Studies, Harvard University.

2/2013 ‘Suffering Sobriety: Alcoholism and Masculinity in Japan,’ International Studies and Programs, University of Missouri - St. Louis.

3/2011 ‘The Fragility of Sobriety: Alcoholism and Masculinity in Japan,’ Department of Anthropology Colloquium Series, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa.

4/2010 ‘The Fragility of Sobriety: Alcoholism and Masculinity in Japan,’ Center for Japanese Studies Graduate Seminar, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa.

Courses regularly taught

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
Introduction to Sociology
Japanese Society
Medical Anthropology
Anthropology of Addiction
Ethnographies of Asia seminar

Courses taught occasionally or previously

Japanese Popular Culture
Food and the Self
Contemporary Problems in Anthropology
Sports, Culture, and Society
Race and Racism
Introduction to East Asia

Language competency

- English - native speaker
- Japanese - advanced speaking, comprehension, and writing
- Portuguese - intermediate speaking, comprehension, and writing

Professional memberships

- American Anthropological Association (AAA)
  - General Anthropology Division (GAD) - Secretary/Treasurer
  - Society for East Asian Anthropology (SEAA)
  - Marxist Anthropology Interest Group (MAG)
- ASIANetwork
- Anthropology of Japan in Japan (AJJ)
- Association for Asian Studies (AAS)
- Japan Anthropology Workshop (JAWS)