

Christian Alvarado, Ph.D.

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

African Studies : History and Historiography : Memory Studies : Cultural Studies : Modern Literature
Kenya's Mau Mau Uprising : Conspiracism and Conspiracy Theories : Postcolonial Theory

EDUCATION

2017 - 2023 University of California, Santa Cruz, History of Consciousness Department, Ph.D.,
Designated Emphasis in Critical Race and Ethnic Studies

2014 - 2017 San Diego State University, History Department, M.A.

2009 - 2013 University of Nevada, Reno, Economics Department, B.S.

PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH

Book Manuscript

"The Storm in Kenya": Mau Mau and the End of Empire (finalizing manuscript for full peer review with Penn State University Press)

Articles & Edited Volume Chapters

Currently Preparing for Review

2026 *"Mau-Mauísmo, Inter-Imperial Rhetorics, and the Beginning of the End of the Portuguese Empire,"* with *African Studies Review*.

Published

2025 "Ghosts at the Banquet: The Kenyan Mau Mau in Global Memory," *Kritika Kultura*, Special Issue on "Decolonizing the Study of Memory," No. 46, Art. 15.

2022 "On Reading Mau Mau," in *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press), Vol. 9, Iss. 3.

2022 "Mau Mau as Method," in *History in Africa* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press), Vol. 49.

2021 "'In the Spirit of Harambee': Kenyan Student Unions in the German Democratic Republic and Yugoslavia, 1964-68," in *Socialist Encounters: Relations, Transfers and Exchanges between Africa and East Germany* (Berlin: DeGruyter).

Short-Form Writing

2025 “Mau Mau and/as Conspiracy: A Reconsideration,” *Journal of the History of Ideas Blog*, <https://www.jhiblog.org/2025/12/10/mau-mau-and-as-conspiracy-a-reconsideration/>.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor of Record

- Fall 2026 *Apartheid in African and World History: Concept, System, and Law* • Upper Division Undergraduate Seminar (University of California, Berkeley)
- Fall 2026 *Honors Global Oral and Rhetorical Cultures* • Lower Division Undergraduate Course (San José State University, Humanities Honors Program)
- 2025-2026 *Nature and World Cultures* • Upper Division Undergraduate Seminar (San José State University)
- 2025-2026 *Visions of Democracy* • Lower Division Undergraduate Course (San José State University)
- 2025-2026 *Introduction to Critical Humanities* • Upper Division Undergraduate Seminar (San José State University)
- Fall 2025 *History and Memory in the Okinawan Islands* • Upper Division Undergraduate Course (UC Santa Cruz)
- 2019-2026 *Chronicles of Education* • Lower Division Undergraduate Course (San José State University)
- 2024-2025 *Humanities in the Modern World* • Upper Division Undergraduate Seminar (San José State University)
- Spring 2021 *Politics of Violence* • Upper Division Undergraduate Seminar (UC Santa Cruz)

Teaching Assistant (UC Santa Cruz)

- 2020 *What is Resistance?* • Prof. Banu Bargu, Lower-Division Undergraduate Course
- 2020 *Gender and Transnational Migration* • Prof. Ceylan Cemali, Upper-Division Undergraduate course
- 2019 *Introduction to Critical Race and Ethnic Studies* • Prof. Christine Hong, Lower-Division Undergraduate Course
- 2018 *Understanding Popular Music* • Prof. Jared Gampel, Lower-Division Undergraduate Course

Other Academic Roles

- 2025-2026 *Academic Advisor* • Humanities Department and Teacher Preparation Program (San José State University)
- 2022 *Employing Humanities Initiative* • Graduate Student Researcher, Dr. Jasmine Alinder, Office of the Dean of Humanities (UC Santa Cruz)
- 2020-2021 *Communications Team* • Graduate Student Researcher, Dr. Nathaniel Deutsch, The Humanities Institute (UC Santa Cruz)

GRANTS & AWARDS (SELECTED)

Recent Prizes and Awards

- 2026 African Studies Association Junior Scholar Professional Development Grant

University of California, Davis

- 2023-2025 University of California President's and Andrew Mellon Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow

University of California, Santa Cruz

- 2022-2023 American Council of Learned Societies Dissertation Completion Fellow
- 2022-2023 Ford Dissertation Completion Fellow (*Declined*)
- 2022-2023 University of California President's Pre-Professoriate Fellow (*Declined*)
- 2021-2023 Peer Mentor Fellow, Graduate Student Success Program
- 2021 Hayden White Fellow in Historical and Cultural Theory
- 2021 Modern Language Association Summer Teaching Institute
- 2021 Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning Graduate Pedagogy Fellow
- 2019 Center for Archival Research and Training Fellow
- 2019 Social Science Research Council Dissertation Proposal Development Fellow
- 2017-2019 Eugene V. Cota-Robles Fellow

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS & INVITED LECTURES (SELECTED)

- 2025 "Forms of Persuasion: (Post)Colonial Counter-Insurgency and the Rhetoric of Conspiracy," African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia
- 2025 "How to Settle the Sins of the Past?: On Memory and Reparations," Memory Studies Association Annual Meeting, Prague, Czech Republic

- 2025 “‘Everywhere, in these Occasions, Danger Grows’: Conspiracism and the Foundations of Empire’,” Narrative Matters 2025: Disparate Narrative Worlds: Crisis, Conflict, and the Possibility of Hope, Paris, France
- 2024 “From Hauhau to Mau Mau: Secret Societies, Ethnicity, and Colonial Conspiracism” and “Global Dimensions in the Study of Mau Mau,” African Studies Association Annual Conference, Chicago, US
- 2024 Keynote Address: “‘The Storm in Kenya’: Mau Mau, pan-Africanism, and the End of Empire,” Mau Mau: Transitions and Contours of the Postcolonial State Conference, University of Nairobi, Kenya
- 2024 “‘The Tragic Silliness of Fanatic Man’: (Post)Colonial Despair and Conspiracist Desires,” Association of Postcolonial Thought Symposium, University of Massachusetts, Amherst
- 2024 “Alex Jones’ Africa: the Era of Decolonization in Africa and the Roots of Right-Wing Conspiracism,” Memory Studies Association Annual Conference, Lima, Peru
- 2023 “African Studies in California: Emerging Scholars on Connections, Constraints, and Methodologies,” African Studies Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco, US
- 2023 “Ghosts at the Banquet: Mau Mau and Global Memory,” Memory Studies Association Annual Conference, Newcastle, United Kingdom
- 2022 “The Spirit of Mau Mau: Global Memory, Local Contestation, and the Events of African Decolonization,” Memory Studies Association Annual Conference, Virtual Symposium
- 2021 “Pathologies of Crisis: the Social Sciences and the Problem of African Freedom,” African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Virtual Symposium
- 2021 “‘They’ve Got Mau Mau on the Brain’: Civilization, Decolonization, and Mid-20th Century Terrorism,” American Historical Association Pacific Coast Branch Annual Conference, Virtual Symposium
- 2018 “‘Immediate and Complete Independence’: Neoliberal Capitalism, Development, and the Historiography of the Angolan Revolution,” 8th Annual AISA International Interdisciplinary Conference, Multimedia University of Kenya

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE (SELECTED)

- 2026-2029 Board of Directors, Representative for Emerging Scholars, African Studies Association
- 2026-2028 Senior Book Review Editor, *African Studies Review*
- 2024-2025 Book Review Editor, *African Studies Review*

- 2025 Chair, Best Africa-Based Dissertation Award Committee, African Studies Association
- 2024-2026 Delegate of the African Studies Association, National Humanities Alliance Annual Humanities Advocacy Day, Washington DC
- 2023 Local Arrangements Committee, African Studies Association
- 2023 Vice-Chancellor for Research Search Committee (UC Santa Cruz)
- 2022-2023 Graduate Council of the Academic Senate (UC Santa Cruz)
- 2021 Design Workshop for a New Academy, UC Santa Cruz Team, American Council of Learned Societies

LANGUAGES

Portuguese	Professional Working Proficiency
French	Working Proficiency
Kiswahili	Working Proficiency
Gĩkũyũ	Limited Working Proficiency
Amharic	Introductory

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

African Studies Association
Memory Studies Association (Co-Chair of the Global Memories Working Group)
Association of Postcolonial Thought