

Michael McCanless | C.V.

PhD Student | Department of Geography | he/him/his
University of Kentucky | 120 Patterson Drive, Lexington, KY 40506-0027
michael.mccanless@uky.edu

EDUCATION

degrees

- 2021 – PhD Candidate, Geography, *University of Kentucky (expected graduation May 2025)*
three article dissertation
- “Constructing public rent: Property tax appeals and the fiscal strategies of rentier capitalism” (*Accepted*)
 - “Locating a ‘fiscal funnel’ in the rental market: Retail investors and the racialized geography of the 1031 exchange in Memphis” (*In progress*)
 - “Participatory fiscal methods: The role of the audit in accountable financial infrastructures” (*In progress*)

committee

Dr. Matthew Zook (Chair) Dr. Lydia Pelot-Hobbs, Dr. Matthew Wilson, Dr. Michael Samers, and Dr. Yujia He

- 2019 – 2021 MA Geography, Geography, *University of Kentucky*
thesis: “Debilitating debts and recapacitating loans: How FinTech made markets for unsecured consumer debt using alternative data and machine learning” (*published in Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*)
- 2013 – 2017 BA Urban Studies, *Rhodes College (Cum Laude)*

other educational achievements

- 2021 – 2023 Graduate Certificate in Digital Mapping
University of Kentucky, Department of Geography
- 2017 – 2018 Fulbright Student Award in the Country of Georgia
National Defense Academy of the Country of Georgia

PUBLICATIONS

peer-reviewed articles

- McCanless, Michael. (Forthcoming). “Constructing public rent: Property tax appeals and the fiscal strategies of rentier capitalism”. *Geoforum* and *Critical Perspectives in Accounting*.
- McCanless, Michael. (2023). Banking on alternative credit scores: Auditing the calculative infrastructure of U.S. consumer lending. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 55(8), 2128–2146. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X231174026>
- Zook, Matthew., & McCanless, Michael. (2022). Mapping the uneven geographies of digital phenomena: The case of blockchain. *The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe Canadien*, 66(1), 23–

36. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cag.12738>

Casey, Zac. & McCanless, Michael. (2018). Looking backward to go forward: Toward a Kliebardian approach to curriculum theory. *Berkeley Review of Education*, 8(1).

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7fj6077q>

book chapters

McCanless, Michael. 2020. Brill/Sense Publishers. "Immigration". An Encyclopedia of Critical Whiteness Studies in Education.

under review

Zook, Matthew and McCanless, Michael. "Blockchain real estate: The messy landing of new markets". *Progress in Economic Geography*. Major revisions. Revisions submitted December 2024.

in-preparation

McCanless, Michael. "Locating a fiscal 'funnel' in the rental market: Retail investors and the racialized geography of the 1031 exchange in Memphis" *Targeted for Antipode*.

McCanless, Michael. "Participatory fiscal methods: The role of the audit in accountable financial infrastructures". *Targeted for Urban Geography*.

AWARDS & HONORS

research awards

2025	Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant, National Science Foundation	\$19,820
2024	Barnhart-Withington Research Award	\$3,450
2020	Barnhart-Withington Research Award	\$1,420
2018	Neighborworks Learning Communities Rural Initiatives	\$50,000
2016	Rhodes College Independent Research Grant	\$500
2015	Institute for Regional Studies Research Grant	\$3,500

fellowships

2024	Graduate Fellowship, Urban Geography Specialty Group of the American Association of Geographers
2024	Geography Department Fellowship, University of Kentucky
2023	NYU-Mellon Institute on Urbanism, NYU-Mellon Foundation
2017	Fulbright Student Award, Fulbright Program in the Country of Georgia
2016	Summer Service Fellowship, Rhodes College

scholarship & other awards

2024	Summer Workshop on Urban Mixed Methods, University of Toronto, School of Cities
2023	IRS Spring Academy on Financialization and De-Financialization, Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space
2023	Best Student Group Map , North American Cartographic Information Society (NACIS)

2020 Travel Grant, University of Kentucky Graduate Student Congress

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

instructor

2025 Global Inequalities (GEO 161), *University of Kentucky*
2024 Global Inequalities (GEO 161), *University of Kentucky*
2023 Introduction to GIS (GEO 309), *University of Kentucky*
2022 (x2) Health Geography (GEO 261), *University of Kentucky*
2018 U.S. Culture and Concepts, *National Defense Academy of the Country of Georgia*

teaching assistantships

2020 Health Geography (GEO261), *University of Kentucky*
2019 Environmental Issues (GEO162), *University of Kentucky*

research assistantships

2021 – 2023 Research Assistant (NSF Grant #1853718), *Blockchain and the New Spaces of Finance*, PI: Dr. Matthew Zook

policy

2018 Legislative Research & Policy Coordinator, Federation of Appalachian Housing Enterprises (Fahe)

CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

paper presentations

2024 “Where do deferred capital gains go? Turn-key rentals and racialized geographies of the 1031 exchange in Memphis”. *Southeastern Division of the American Association of Geographers*. Greenville, South Carolina
2024 “Constructing public rent: Property tax appeals and the local distortion of urban valuation”. *Annual Meeting of the American Collegiate Schools of Planning*. Seattle, Washington.
2024 “The impact of corporate rentiership on property assessment and valuation in Memphis, TN”. *Urban Affairs Association Annual Meeting*. New York City, New York.
2023 “Making a market for campus investments: the UKInvests program and financial citizenship”. *Southeastern Division of the American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting*. Co-presented with Jed Debruin, Jacob Saindon and Jack Swab. Norfolk, Virginia.
2023 “Public Data Tools for Understanding Urban Property Ownership”. *North American Cartographic Information Society (NACIS)*. Co-presented with Jacob Saindon. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
2023 “Banking on Alternative Credit Scores: New Geographies of Calculative

- Infrastructure in U.S. Consumer Lending”. *Accounting for Space*. Toronto, Canada.
- 2022 “Three vignettes of a billboardscape”. *Southeastern Division of the American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting*. Co-presented with Jacob Saindon and Matthew Wilson. Atlanta, Georgia.
- 2022 “Changing Spaces of Ownership: Web3, NFTs and the Financialization of Everything”. *The 6th Global Conference on Economic Geography*. Co-presented with Matt Zook. Dublin, Ireland.
- 2022 “Mapping the Uneven Geography of Digital Phenomena: The Case of Blockchain”. *American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting*. Co-presented with Matt Zook. Virtual attendance.
- 2021 “Debilitating debt and recapacitating loans in the online consumer lending industry”. *American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting*. Virtual attendance.
- 2020 “Money is a fundamental ingredient of life’: FinTech and the platform futures of debt.” *American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting*. Virtual attendance.
- 2017 “Economic Precarity and Subjects in Transition: Lessons from the Country of Georgia and the United States”. *10th International Research Conference on American Studies*. Tbilisi, Georgia
- 2017 “Thinking-together post-industrial labor education: Paul Willis and the service economy” *7th International Conference on Critical Education (ICCE)*. Athens, Greece.

panel organization

- 2024 “Urban Geographies of the American South”. *Southeastern Division of the American Association of Geographers. Panel* co-organized with Ryan Pardue and presentations from Coleman Allums, Scott Markley, and Mia Wood. Greenville, SC.
- 2024 “Digital technologies and land justice”. *Digital Geography Specialty Group Annual Plenary Panel* co-organized with Emily Barrett and panelists Annita Hetoevéhotohke’e Lucchesi, Joyce Percel, Genevieve Reid, Isaac Rivera. Virtual.
- 2023 “Data Infrastructures II: Cities”. *Big Data & Society Colloquium: Data Practices & Digital Social Worlds* co-organized with Jun Zhang and panelists Erin McElroy, Julien Migozzi, Martin Tironi and Rachel Weber. Virtual
- 2020 “Space, Technology and Difference”. Summer Brown Bag Series. Member of Graduate Student Organizing Committee, with J. Saindon and I. Spangler. Lexington, KY.

poster presentations

- 2019 “Local Resources, Global Wealth: The Role of Appalachian Practitioner Organizations in Disentangling Local Economies”. *Appalachian Studies Association Annual Meeting*. Asheville, NC.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS, APPEARANCES, & LECTURES

invited presentations

- 2021 “Debilitating debts and recapacitating loans: How FinTech made markets for unsecured consumer debt using Alternative Data and Machine Learning”.
University of Kentucky Geography Colloquium Series. 27 August.

media appearances

- 2022 Interview with Wendy Chun. “Discriminating Data: Correlation, Neighborhoods, and the New Politics of Recognition”. [*Big Data & Society*](#).
2017 Interviewed by Tyler Serritt. “Calhoun Resident Michael McCanless Wins Fulbright Award to Teach in Europe”. [*Northwest Georgia News*](#).
2016 Interviewed by Sydney Neeley. “Rhodes College students devote summer to making difference in Memphis.” [*Commercial Appeal*](#)

departmental guest lectures

- 2022 “Financial inequalities: what’s in a credit score”. Guest Lecture, *GEO 161 Global Inequalities*, *University of Kentucky*. 23 February.

SERVICE

peer reviewer

Big Data & Society (2021), *Journal of Urban Technology* (2023), *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* (2023)

editorial positions

2023 – 2024 Assistant Editor, *Big Data & Society*

special themes

2022 Editorial Assistant, [The City as a License: Design, Rights and Civics in a Blockchain Society](#), *Big Data & Society*.

disciplinary & departmental

- 2023 – 2024 Personnel Committee Representative, *UK Geography Graduate Student Union*
2023 – 2024 Student Representative, Digital Geographies Specialty Group
2022 – 2023 Community Renewal Representative, *UK Geography Graduate Student Union*
2022 – 2023 Social Chair, *UK Geography Graduate Student Union*
2022 – 2023 Graduate Committee Representative, *UK Geography Graduate Student Union*
2022 – 2023 Mentorship Program Coordinator, *UK Geography Graduate Student Union*
2020 – 2022 Kickball Team Captain, *UK Geography Graduate Student Union*
2021 – 2022 Mentorship Program Coordinator, *UK Geography Graduate Student Union*
2020 – 2021 Research Committee Member, *United Campus Workers of Kentucky*
2020 – 2022 Graduate Student Steward, *United Campus Workers of Kentucky*
2020 Session Chair, *Dimensions of Political Ecology Conference*.
2019 – 2020 Colloquium Committee Representative, *UK Geography Graduate Student Union*

public panels & committees

2018 Global UGRAD Exchange Program Panelist, *U.S Embassy in Georgia*

SOFTWARE SKILLS*mapping & gis*

Desktop (ArcGIS Desktop/Pro, QGIS)

Libraries & APIs for mapping & web design (Leaflet, IIF, D3.js, Chart.js, jQuery, Bootstrap)

language proficiencies

Query (SQL)

Markup (CSS, HTML, XML, AJAX)

Programming (JavaScript, R)

data & database systems

Relational databases (ArcCatalog, PostgreSQL/PostGIS)

Version control software (GitHub)

Web services (GitHub Pages, SEO/Google Search Console)

AFFILIATIONS & MEMBERSHIPS

Urban Affairs Association (Since 2023)

Southeastern Division of the American Association of Geographers (since 2022)

Global Network on Financial Geography (since 2021)

New Mappings Collaboratory (since 2021)

Committee on Social Theory (since 2019)

Association of American Geographers (since 2019)

Digital Geography Specialty Group

Economic Geography Specialty Group

Urban Geography Specialty Group