Richard L. Kirk

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Research and Teaching Interests

Housing; urban planning and policy; urban governance and state-society relations; environmental justice; racial capitalism, urban marginality, and displacement; disability justice and sensory geographies; multiculturalism and urban diversity; qualitative methods

Education

Ph.D., Geography, UCLA — Expected Spring 2027
Dissertation: "Public housing, the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, and the future of South Central Los Angeles"
Committee: John Agnew (chair), Kelly Kay, Juan Herrera, José Loya (Dept. of Urban Planning)

Graduate Certificate, Urban Humanities, UCLA — 2024

M.S., Geography, Applied Anthropology Minor, University of North Texas — 2022

B.S., Geography, Anthropology Minor, *summa cum laude*, University of North Texas — 2020

Publications

Peer-reviewed articles

12. **Kirk, Richard**. (Under review). Post-political partnerships: Retrospective depoliticization and public housing redevelopment in Watts. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*.

11. **Kirk, Richard**. (2026). Acceptable harm: Fragmented accountability and the governance of environmental exposure in public housing redevelopment. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, online first, *0*(0), 1–23. DOI: 10.1177/02637758261457187

10. **Kirk, Richard**. (2026). On the dichotomy between housing justice and environmental justice. *Human Geography*, online first, *0*(0), 1–9. DOI: 10.1177/19427786261440885

9. Behm, Derrick, and **Kirk, Richard**. (2026). DeafSpace and the city: Theorizing transgression, identity, and the politics of belonging in urban planning. *Planning Theory*, online first, *0*(0), 1–22. DOI: 10.1177/147309522614308

8. **Kirk, Richard**. (2025). Financialization and the reorganization of U.S. public housing. *Human Geography*, *19*(2), 293–303. DOI: 10.1177/19427786251396898

7. Ferrer, Alexander, and **Kirk, Richard**. (2025). Urbicidal economics and the racial geographies of triage. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 49*(2), 304–321. DOI: 10.1111/1468-2427.13301

6. **Kirk, Richard**. (2024). Neoliberal necropolitics and the global competition for urban dominance. *Geoforum*, *155*, 104107. DOI: 10.1016/j.geoforum.2024.104107

5. **Kirk, Richard**, and Behm, Derrick. (2024). Contesting elite capture: Repositioning insurgent planning for mass movements. *Human Geography*, *16*(3), 347–352. DOI: 10.1177/19427786241263635

4. **Kirk, Richard**. (2024). Legitimising displacement: Academic discourse, territorial stigmatisation and gentrification. *Urban Studies*, *61*(13), 2492–2512. DOI: 10.1177/00420980241235015

3. **Kirk, Richard**. (2024). What Los Angeles tells us about Dracula urbanism. *Urban Geography*, *45*(4), 652–670. DOI: 10.1080/02723638.2023.2226551

2. **Kirk, Richard**. (2023). Neoliberal multiculturalism in Dallas: The discursive foundations of diversity-led gentrification in an aspiring U.S. global city. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, *55*(6), 1392–1407. DOI: 10.1177/0308518X231152258

1. **Kirk, Richard**. (2023). Lifestyle centers, the next boom and bust after shopping malls? Governance, public-private partnerships, and Guy Debord's spectacle in Dallas-Fort Worth. *Cities*, *133*, 104155. DOI: 10.1016/j.cities.2022.104155

Editorially reviewed articles

2. **Kirk, Richard**. (2025). For a political geography of artificial intelligence: Fighting ghost work, exploitation, and the making of a global digital underclass. *AntipodeOnline*. https://antipodeonline.org/2025/07/30/for-a-political-geography-of-ai/

1. **Kirk, Richard**. (2023). Changing urban fabrics: Thinking through the lopsided city. *Dialogues in Urban Research*, *3*(1), 288–292. DOI: 10.1177/27541258231204007

Book chapters

1. Chatterjee, Ipsita, Ahmed, Waquar, and **Kirk, Richard**. (Forthcoming). Fetishism of the commodity: Theorizing value and the "value" of bourgeois, Marxist, and post-Marxist theories. In R. Das, D. Fasenfest, and R. E. Latham (eds.) *The Power of Marxist Thought*, *Vol. 2*, pp. __– __. Studies in Critical Social Sciences book series. Brill.

Book reviews

1. **Kirk, Richard**. (2021). *The Anti-Capitalist Chronicles* by David Harvey. *Human Geography*, *14*(1), 151–153. DOI: 10.1177/1942778620979313

Public-facing writing

1. **Kirk, Richard**. (2025). Public housing: A moral case for its dignified revival. *Shelterforce*. https://shelterforce.org/2025/08/15/public-housing-a-moral-case-for-its-dignified-revival/

Edited volumes and editorial writing

2. **Kirk, Richard**, and Behm, Derrick. (2026). Editors' introduction: On margins and junctures. *Critical Planning Journal*, *28*(1), 1–5. DOI: 10.5070/CP8.62250

1. Behm, Derrick, and **Kirk, Richard**. (Eds.) (2025). *Critical Planning Journal Vol. 28: Margins and Junctures*.

Books in preparation

1. **Kirk, Richard**. *Façade: How public-private partnerships undermine public and affordable housing.* Proposal submitted to University of California Press.
   — *Façade* examines how public-private partnerships (PPPs) have transformed housing policy in the United States over the past three decades. The book argues that federal programs promoted as community revitalization strategies in fact dismantled traditional public housing while embedding private profit-making logics into housing governance. What results is not only the redistribution of resources upward—from communities to private developers—but also a transfer of risk onto the state and residents themselves. Drawing on research in South Central Los Angeles alongside comparative case studies across the country, the book situates housing policy within broader processes of financialization, privatization, and racial capitalism.

Book chapters in preparation

1. Behm, Derrick, and **Kirk, Richard**. Housing Deaf futures: The enabling justice of Deaf enclaves. For inclusion in *Handbook on Urban Policy and Disability*.

Articles in preparation

1. Behm, Derrick, and **Kirk, Richard**. Deaf affordable housing and the policy problem(s) of integration. For submission to *Housing Policy Debate*.

Presented Research

Acceptable harm: Fragmented accountability and the governance of environmental exposure in public housing redevelopment. The American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA 2026

Profits and projects: The Choice Neighborhoods Initiative and the transformation of the Jordan Downs public housing projects in Watts. Urban History Association 11th Biennial Conference: Metropolitan Majorities. Los Angeles, CA 2025

Beyond HOPE VI: A case study of the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative and the redevelopment of the Jordan Downs projects in South Central Los Angeles. International Conference on Urban Affairs, Vancouver, Canada 2025

Legitimising displacement: Academic discourse, territorial stigmatisation and gentrification. The American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, Honolulu, HI 2024

Legitimising displacement: Academic discourse, territorial stigmatisation and gentrification. Sophos Seminar Series, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA 2024

Neoliberal multiculturalism in Dallas: The discursive foundations of diversity-led gentrification in an aspiring U.S. global city. The American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, Denver, CO 2023

Multiculturalism as an urban development strategy: A case study of the Dallas International District. Sophos Seminar Series, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA 2023

The decline of great American malls and rise of luxury mixed-use developments: (Un)spectacular creative destruction in the late capitalist American city. Southwest Division of the American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, Oklahoma City, OK 2021

Conference Sessions Organized

Paper session, Gentrification and ghettoization: Geographies of eviction, banishment, and stigmatization. The American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, Honolulu, HI (co-organized with Alexander Ferrer, UCLA Geography) 2024

Public Scholarship and Engagement

Organizer and moderator, *Living with Landlords: Rights, Struggles, and Possibilities* 2025

Panel discussion. Presented by *Critical Planning Journal*, UCLA Institute on Inequality and Democracy, and Los Angeles Poverty Department. Hosted at Skid Row History Museum & Archive. Attendance ≈ 100 people. Recording of event: Video Link

Guest, Critically Speaking, hosted by Dr. Therese Markow, "Necropolitics and Inequality" 2025
[Podcast Link]

External guest lecturer, Anthropology 4765/5765 Urban Beings, University of North Texas 2024
Topic: Neoliberal multiculturalism

External guest lecturer, Anthropology 4765/5765 Urban Beings, University of North Texas 2026
Topic: Public housing redevelopment

Research Appointments

Form and DisFunction Lab, UCLA Summer 2026–Present
Project Manager
Supervisor: Jenny Lu
— Coordinate interdisciplinary research on DeafSpace, spatial cognition, and the everyday spatial practices of DeafBlind communities
— Manage research design and implementation across projects drawing on geography, cognitive science, linguistic anthropology, and disability studies
— Develop and administer mixed qualitative and spatial research protocols, including GPS tracking, travel diaries, follow-along observation, interviews, and spatial mapping
— Coordinate participant recruitment, research logistics, data collection, and project documentation in collaboration with faculty and student researchers
— Analyze embodied, tactile, linguistic, and multimodal forms of spatial knowledge, communication, navigation, and wayfinding
— Integrate qualitative, behavioral, and geospatial data to examine egocentric and allocentric frames of reference in everyday urban environments
— Contribute to research protocols, literature reviews, data management, visualization, and preparation of findings for academic publication and presentation

Teaching and Mentorship Experience

University of California, Los Angeles

Associate Instructor, People and the Earth's Ecosystems	Fall 2026
Teaching Fellow, People and the Earth's Ecosystems	Winter 2026
Teaching Fellow, Introduction to GIS	Fall 2025
Teaching Associate, History of European Cities	Spring 2025
Teaching Associate, Introduction to GIS	Winter 2025
Teaching Associate, People and the Earth's Ecosystems	Fall 2024
Teaching Assistant, Ethnicity in American Cities	Spring 2024
Teaching Assistant, Cultural Geography	Fall 2023, Winter 2024

Grad-to-Grad Mentorship Program 2023–

— Mentored incoming graduate students; held regular meetings to discuss acclimation, progress, and to answer questions about our program

Mentee: Jordan Steingard 2023–2024

Kofi Siabi 2024–2025

University of North Texas

Teaching Assistant, Economic Geography Spring 2022

Teaching Assistant, Culture, Environment and Society Fall 2020, Fall 2021

Teaching Assistant, Urban Geography Spring 2020

Academic Service

Co-managing editor, *Critical Planning Journal* 2024–2026

— Coordinated peer review process, including initial manuscript screening, reviewer selection, and communication with authors

— Collaborated with editorial team to develop annual theme, solicit submissions, and shape editorial vision

— Provided developmental editing for selected articles to ensure clarity, scholarly rigor, and alignment with journal scope

— Oversaw copyediting, layout review, and final publication preparation in partnership with design and production staff

— Fundraised and promoted journal visibility through academic networks, conference announcements, and social media outreach

— Partnered with the Skid Row Museum & Archive and the UCLA Luskin Institute on Inequality and Democracy to organize a public event on housing justice in Los Angeles, bringing together tenant-rights lawyers, community activists, scholars, and residents. Event: "Living with Landlords: Rights, Struggles, and Possibilities."

Peer review for academic journals

Antipode; Cities; *Critical Planning Journal*; *Dialogues in Urban Research*; *Geoforum*; *Housing and Society*; *Human Geography; International Development Planning Review*; *Journal of Community Practice*; *Journal of Race, Ethnicity and the City*; *Space and Culture*

UCLA Geography Graduate Student Association 2023–2024

Vice President & "Brown Bag" Representative

— Co-organized multiple meetings per quarter to discuss and address departmental matters; organized and facilitated informational gatherings on professional development related topics

Fellowships, Grants, and Awards

Haynes Lindley Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship — 2025
The John Randolph Haynes and Dora Haynes Foundation — $28,600
— Highly competitive fellowship supporting policy-oriented dissertation research in Southern California

Howard and Irene Levine Program in Housing and Social Responsibility Research Grant — 2025
UCLA Ziman Center for Real Estate — $3,500

Summer Mentored Research Fellowship — 2025
UCLA Division of Graduate Education — $6,000

Doctoral Travel Grant — 2025
UCLA Division of Graduate Education — $1,000

Summer Fellowship — 2024
UCLA Dept. of Geography — $6,000

Doctoral Travel Grant — 2024
UCLA Division of Graduate Education — $1,000

Institute of Human Geography Research Grant — 2023
Institute of Human Geography — $6,000

Summer Fellowship — 2023
UCLA Dept. of Geography — $6,000

UCLA Graduate Division Fellowship — 2022–2023
UCLA Division of Graduate Education — $56,958 in tuition & fees

Voertman-Ardoin Graduate Fellowship — 2020–2022
University of North Texas College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences — Increased stipend & reduced TA load

2020 F. Andrew Schoolmaster Award to Outstanding Undergraduate Student — 2020
University of North Texas College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences — $1,000

President's List (4.0 GPA) all semesters — 2018–2020
University of North Texas Office of the President

Academic and Professional Memberships

Urban Affairs Association 2023–
American Association of Geographers 2021–
Urban Geography Specialty Group 2022–
Council of Texas Archaeologists 2019–2022
Texas Archeological Society 2013–2022
North Texas Archeological Society 2013–2022

Other Experience

Integrated Environmental Solutions McKinney, TX
Archaeological Field Technician, Geophysical Surveyor 2019–2020

Cova Gran de Santa Linya Archaeological Field School Sant Llorenç de Montgai, Spain
Research Assistant, Excavator of Mousterian (neanderthal) shelter occupation site 2019
Academic credit awarded by Connecticut College

Lithic Classification of Jornada Mogollon Archaeological Site Denton, TX
Research Assistant 2018–2019
University of North Texas

Software Skills

ArcGIS Pro
QGIS
Microsoft Excel
NVivo
Adobe Illustrator
Adobe InDesign

Languages

English
American Sign Language

References

John Agnew
Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Geography and Italian
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Dept. of Italian, UCLA

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Michael Storper
Distinguished Professor of Regional and International Development
Department of Urban Planning, UCLA
Affiliated Professor of Geography, UCLA
Professor of Economic Geography
Department of Geography and Environment, London School of Economics and Political Science
Research Associate (chercheur associé)
Centre d'Études Européennes et de Politique Comparée, Sciences Po Paris
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