

The dog that didn't bark:  
Group implication and welfare state politics

DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

Frederik Hjorth  
M.Sc., Political Science  
University of Copenhagen

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## 1 Introduction

Arguably the most politically controversial source of change in modern welfare states in recent decades has been the influx of immigrants and refugees into originally highly ethnically homogeneous populations. In Denmark, an oft-cited case of nation state politics shaped by immigration flows, the population share of immigrants and descendants has increased from 3.1 percent in 1980 to 11.6 percent in 2012.<sup>1</sup> This increase in ethnic heterogeneity has shaped the politics of welfare states irreversibly, giving rise to new right-wing populist parties that have in many countries drawn on the issue salience of immigration to attain pivotal political influence and significant electoral support (Norris, 2005; Thomsen, 2006; Kitschelt, 2007).

However, like Sherlock Holmes' curious incident of the dog that did not bark, ethnic heterogeneity in the welfare state is also notable for what it *has not done*: namely, significantly alter support for universal welfare policies such as unemployment assistance, education, or health care. The reason we would expect this is that we have seen exactly this happen elsewhere. In the United States, an extensive literature demonstrates that the ostensibly non-racial issue of welfare has become 'racialized', in that popular opposition to welfare is driven by the perception of welfare as 'black' program and common stereotypes about blacks as lazy and undeserving (Gilens, 1996, 2000; Mendelberg, 1997, 2001). It is because of this racial association, the argument goes, that support for welfare among white voters in the United States remains relatively low. Winter (2008) presents a theory of racialization as a specific instance of the general phenomenon of *group implication*, whereby a policy can become implicitly associated with a specific group, and voter support for that policy in turn becomes driven by attitudes toward the group in question.

If this argument is correct, the increasing ethnic fractionalization of welfare states should provide fertile ground for racialization of welfare issues. Yet there is little indication that this has been the case. In Denmark, popular support for increasing government spending on welfare state services remains high and has been relatively stable since the late 1970's, even while spending itself has gone up (Togeby, 2004). The theoretically expectable racialization has not occurred; the dog did not bark.

## 2 Dissertation topic

This contradiction presents a puzzle for scholars of public opinion and welfare state politics. If welfare politics really are immune to racialization, political science needs to revise its understanding of the contingency of the effects of ethnic heterogeneity. If not, we should expect immigration to have potentially severe effects on present and future public support for the welfare state. This is the core research puzzle behind my proposed dissertation. Stated in briefer, slightly more general terms:

*Are welfare state attitudes susceptible to group implication?*

Two clarifications are in order. First of all, in my research question I follow Winter (2008) in construing racialization as a special case of the phenomenon *group implication*, the

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<sup>1</sup>Source: Statistics Denmark, table FOLK2, [www.statbank.dk/folk2](http://www.statbank.dk/folk2).

theory behind which is described in section 3.3 below. Secondly, while I expect to draw my data from a single country, for practical purposes Denmark, the dissertation aims to answer an essentially comparative question, i.e. to what extent processes of group implication are moderated by political/institutional context. By shedding light on this contextual contingency (or lack thereof), the dissertation aims to advance the discipline's understanding of the effects of welfare regimes and the sustainability of popular support for the welfare state.

More specifically, the dissertation is designed to answer the following questions:

1. Does group implication draw on implicit attitudes?
2. Is voter support for popular welfare state policies susceptible to group implication?
3. Does group implication occur in welfare state media coverage and political rhetoric?

The remainder of this proposal outlines how I plan to answer these questions. First, section 3 presents three competing theoretical views on how we should expect welfare state attitudes to react to immigration, including the theoretical point of departure for my project, group implication theory.

Second, in section 4 I explain how I plan to draw on a diverse set of methods, both observational and experimental, to address the questions above. I end sections 3 and 4 by explicating how I intend to contribute to the relevant political science literature in these fields.

Collecting on the themes from the previous sections, in section 5 I present an outline of my proposed dissertation. Since I plan to write an article-based dissertation, the section will sketch out the content of each of four planned papers addressing the questions above, as well as a tentative timetable for the project.

In section 6, I describe my personal qualifications for engaging with the dissertation, including my teaching experience, my methodological skills and my work ethic. Finally, in section 7, I suggest suitable dissertation advisors and describe how my project fits into the existing scholarly environment at the Department of Political Science.

### **3 Theories on immigration and support for the welfare state**

As described in the introduction, previous experience suggests we should expect popular support for the welfare state to decline in response to immigration. And yet so far it has not. Broadly speaking, the literature presents three competing theoretical answers to this puzzle: *culturalist-institutionalist* theories, theories of *out-group prejudice*, and related to but distinct from the latter, *group implication theory*.

#### **3.1 Culturalist-institutionalist theories**

One class of theories, broadly construable as cultural-institutional, explains differing levels of support for welfare programs with reference to macro-level phenomena. Some of these argue that the low level of support for welfare programs in the United States stems from a uniquely American culture of individualism which tends to attribute poverty to laziness rather than external circumstance. The culturalist argument goes that this individualistic ideology, fused

with stereotypes about African-Americans as lazy, causes white Americans to oppose high levels of welfare spending (Gilens, 1996, 2000). A related argument claims that American voter opposition to race-targeted policies such as school busing or affirmative action is based on principled objection to non-universalistic policies rather than racism (Sniderman et al., 1996; Sniderman and Carmines, 1997). But since they construe the racialization of welfare attitudes as the product of a specifically American set of cultural norms, these arguments would not expect this phenomenon to befall welfare states outside the United States.

Still another type of macro-level explanation, *welfare regime theory*, argues that institutional context, specifically the fiscal basis of welfare programs, structures support for those same programs. Based on Esping-Andersen’s (1990) famous trichotomy, welfare regime theory argues that liberal welfare regimes (such as the United States) depress voter support for redistribution, because by employing means-tested programs they reinforce the distinction between those funding and receiving welfare services. In contrast, social democratic welfare regimes (such as Denmark), in which most citizens simultaneously fund and receive welfare services, enjoy broad support because this very distinction is blurred (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Rothstein, 1998; Larsen, 2008; Jæ ger, 2009; Crepaz and Damron, 2009). In other words, the programmatic structure of the welfare state shapes support for itself.

While clearly distinct, culturalist and institutionalist theories both predict that due to macro-level differences compared to the United States, welfare state attitudes will be largely immune to the changes in ethnic heterogeneity caused by immigration. As described in the introduction, the stylized fact of largely unchanged voter support for the welfare state in the face of immigration fits culturalist-institutionalist theories’ expectation of continuity. However, as is often the case with macro-level theories, they fail to account for within-unit variation. And as it turns out, variation within countries, the subject of an alternative class of theories, is fairly strong.

### 3.2 Theories of out-group prejudice

The within-country link between ethnic heterogeneity and welfare state support is the focus of a class of theories we may call *theories of out-group prejudice*. Building on Tajfel and Turner’s (1979; 1986) experimental work, which showed that minimally cued in-group/out-group distinctions can induce discriminatory behaviour, these theories argue, first, that in-group solidarity and out-group hostility are universal phenomena, i.e. not contingent on particular cultural norms or institutional regimes. Secondly, because racial group is a highly salient category of social identity, *racial group loyalty* will cause voters to oppose welfare spending on racial/ethnic out-groups (Luttmer, 2001).

The core prediction of theories of out-group prejudice, then, is that a negative association between ethnic heterogeneity and support for welfare state programs should hold across cultural and institutional contexts. Famously, Putnam (2007) shows that ethnic fractionalization does seem to deplete *social trust*, though studies at a similar level of aggregation have thus far failed to replicate the pattern in other contexts (Hooghe et al., 2009; Gesthuizen et al., 2009).

Evidence for the effect on welfare state support is somewhat more consistent, if not overwhelming. Across United States localities, increases in neighbourhood non-white welfare

reciprocity decreases white support for welfare programs (Luttmer, 2001) and ethnic diversification reduces tax financing of public goods (Hopkins, 2009). Across countries, Alesina and Glaeser (2006) show a strong, negative association between ethnic heterogeneity and social welfare spending; however, the effect of *perceived* heterogeneity, presumably a more proximate cause, appears to be weak verging on insignificant (Senik et al., 2009). Recently, Dahlberg et al. (2012) have exploited a large-scale refugee placement program in Sweden to show that at the municipality level, an influx of immigrants decreases voter support for redistribution.

The common denominator of these studies, apart from a reliance on Tajfel and Turner’s social identity theory, is a prediction that the negative relationship between exposure to racial/ethnic out-groups and support for redistribution is largely independent of institutional context. This is a theoretically significant prediction, and it is borne out by the fact that Luttmer (2001) and Dahlberg et al. (2012) show it to hold at the individual level in vastly different contexts. Also, by incorporating a model of social categorization, these studies improve on rational choice-based theories which construe opposition to immigration as purely self-interested competition over scarce resources (e.g. Bobo, 1983; Nannestad, 1999). The problem with these latter theories is that they fail to account for the fact that voters are more opposed to redistribution to members of racial/ethnic out-groups than to redistribution within their own group.

However, an important weakness of these studies is that they sidestep the crucial question of how racial/ethnic group affiliation becomes a politically salient distinction to begin with. For example, Luttmer (2001) and Dahlberg et al. (2012) merely posit this fact without theorizing why or how voters would come to mentally associate particular minority groups with particular welfare programs. Alesina and Glaeser (2006) do recognise that this requires explanation, and suggest that “racial hatred is endogenous and often created by entrepreneurial politicians” (p. 136), but they do not elaborate beyond that. The importance of political elites is supported by the fact that some recent studies find the effect of diversity on support for public spending to depend on the presence of salient national rhetoric on immigration (Hopkins, 2011; Schmidt and Spies, 2013). Yet the exact mechanisms remain unclear.

This theoretical lacuna is all the more problematic given that there is widespread agreement that present-day support for actual, old-fashioned racism is minimal (Nielsen, 2004; Banks and Valentino, 2012). In fact, voter attitudes toward immigration are characterised by co-existing, contradictory attitudes, and relatively high levels of tolerance (Gaasholt and Togeby, 1995). In other words, voter attitudes toward immigration are not clear enough that they should necessarily be expected to drive support for welfare programs. Nevertheless, at least at the individual level this does seem to be the case. There is a need for a theoretical account of why this is.

The theoretical centerpiece of my dissertation is an attempt to provide just this, i.e. a conceptual model of how ideas about groups shape attitudes toward public policy. This model, described in the next section, can be labeled *group implication theory*.

### 3.3 The theory of group implication

The key contribution of group implication theory beyond theories of group prejudice is that it specifies the crucial role of media frames in connecting social groups with particular policies.

In the most general sense, *group implication* is “the process through which ideas about social groups (...) can be applied to political issues that do not involve [them] directly” (Winter, 2008, p. 19). Specifically, it is the process during which *cognitive schema about group attributes* are connected to *policy issue frames* through a process of *implicit analogical reasoning*.

We may define *cognitive schema* as “cognitive structure[s] that represent knowledge about a concept” (Fiske and Taylor, 1991), in this case knowledge about groups. Winter (2008) argues that two particular group schema, race and gender, dominate voters’ socio-political cognition. Race and gender are particularly visible, virtually immutable social categories. Still, other categories such as age or class could potentially constitute salient group schema. In order to take this possibility into account, my proposed survey experiment (see section 4.2) will test the effects of alternative group schema beyond race and gender.

The second constituent part of the process of group implication is the *policy issue frame*. There is overwhelming support in the political science literature for the effectiveness of explicit issue framing in swaying policy attitudes, though the effect is strongly mitigated by exposure to competing frames (Sniderman and Theriault, 2004; Hansen, 2007). In this context, however, the focus is on a more subtle type of framing effect: the effect of frames that are structurally similar to existing voter schema, leading voters to draw analogies between them.

To illustrate the idea of structurally analogous policy frames, take the case of the 1995 Canadian referendum on Quebec independence, in which the political discourse opposing independence would often make use of “family” framed arguments, such as: “[the referendum] is like parents getting a divorce, and maybe the parent you don’t like getting custody” (Blanchette and Dunbar, 2001). Following group implication theory, we should expect this frame to lead voters to understand the issue in terms of their pre-existing cognitive and emotional associations with divorce and family life such that, say, this frame would implicitly induce children of divorced parents to be more likely to oppose Quebec independence. The crucial political implication, of course, is that these frames may be used strategically by political entrepreneurs in order to forge winning coalitions (i.e. the “entrepreneurial politicians” suggested by Alesina and Glaeser (2006)).

Finally, a core feature of the process of group implication is that it operates through *implicit* reasoning, i.e. outside of conscious awareness. In fact, the effectiveness of group implication as a rhetorical strategy rests precisely on its implicitness. This is because messages explicitly employing group implication are likely to fail due to norms against explicit reasoning based on stereotypes. In fact, it may be that comparatively strong social norms of equality in welfare states make voters particularly wary of explicitly connecting immigrants with particular policies, even while implicitly harboring that connection. I have designed my project to take this feature into account by employing novel, experimental methods of estimating implicit attitudes (see section 4.1).

My dissertation will contribute to the empirical literature on group implication, which is not very extensive. Beyond Winter (2008), who demonstrates the effect using a survey experiment on a college student sample, Tesler (2012) shows that the debate over the Obama administration’s health care reform in 2009-2010 racialized health care reform, i.e. the association of the reform proposal with president Obama caused voter support for reform to be

driven by racial ideology. Tellingly, a similar study of the 1993-94 controversy over the Clinton administration's health care reform proposal shows that in this case, the issue of health care reform became *genderized*, i.e. gender ideology temporarily became a significant driver of voter support for government-provided health care (Winter, 2005).

## 4 Methodology

In order to test the susceptibility of welfare attitudes to group implication, I plan to draw on a diverse set of methods. In this section I present my plans for using three specific methods: laboratory experiment, survey experiment and automated content analysis.

### 4.1 Estimating implicit attitudes in the laboratory

The implicit nature of the process of group implication carries with it a potential methodological problem: namely, that measuring attitudes using traditional, explicit survey questions may not capture voters' relevant dispositional attitudes toward groups. In plainer terms, because of strong social norms against expressing prejudice, we cannot be sure that people who hold negative attitudes toward racial minorities or the other gender will confess to those attitudes when asked directly in a survey.

This is not to say that explicit survey measures cannot be used to measure prejudice. But explicit measures may suffer from social desirability bias, and the full extent of this potential problem remains unresolved (Iyengar et al., 2011). I would argue there is a strong *prima facie* case that this is indeed a problem. For example, the *racial resentment scale* used by Kinder and Sanders (1996) is an additive index based on respondent agreement to statements such as “*It is really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites*” (Ibid., p. 106). When asked this directly, some people who do hold this opinion may not want to confess to it in a survey.

The implications of this problem are greatest when comparing across countries, where survey methods or cultural norms of expression may differ. For example, Larsen (2011) compares attitudes toward racial/ethnic minorities in the United States, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Denmark, and finds the lowest level of out-group prejudice in the United States. However, the US and UK surveys were part of a face-to-face interview, while the Danish and Swedish surveys were postally distributed. It is at least conceivable that this difference biased the observed levels of prejudice, rendering direct cross-country comparison problematic.<sup>2</sup>

I believe this constitutes a significant methodological challenge for all social science studies involving measures of attitudes toward groups. As part of my dissertation, I plan to employ a method designed to address this specific problem. This is the *Implicit Association Test* (IAT) (Greenwald et al., 1998; Nosek et al., 2006; Galdi et al., 2008; Iyengar et al., 2011).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>The US and UK surveys were self-completion sections attached to large, in-person surveys, respectively the General Social Survey and the British Social Attitude survey (Larsen, 2011, p. 337f). However, it is plausible that the face-to-face setting primed respondents to be more attentive to social norms, even while the specific survey section was self-completed.

<sup>3</sup>Another recent, widely acknowledged and applied method is the *list experiment*, in which randomization ensures that individual respondents can covertly reveal their true attitudes on politically sensitive issues (Sniderman and Carmines, 1997; Kuklinski et al., 1997). However, the list experiment does produce individual-level



The IAT has been used to estimate American voters' attitudes toward blacks (Knowles et al., 2009), Indian voters' attitudes toward women (Beaman et al., 2009), and German voters' attitudes toward gays (Banse et al., 2001). In Hjorth (2010), I conducted the first and as of yet only IAT using Danish voters, estimating implicit attitudes toward blacks, Muslims and gays on a convenience sample of students and achieving results with high face validity.

Though not without its critics (Blanton and Jaccard, 2008; Blanton et al., 2009), controlled comparisons with explicit measures indicate that the IAT reduces social desirability bias in that it identifies more respondents as prejudiced and is a better predictor of actual prejudicial behavior (Iyengar et al., 2011). In my project, I will use the IAT to test whether group implication relies on implicit attitudes, i.e. whether individuals with strong implicit attitudes toward groups are more likely to respond to cues about that group.

While the IAT-based implicit measures are demanding to obtain, the University of Copenhagen has good facilities for conducting laboratory-based social science. The Department of Economics' Centre for Experimental Economics (CEE) has both physical and internet-based laboratories. If feasible, it would be natural to conduct my laboratory experiments in collaboration with the CEE. Additionally, the Department of Psychology has its own, separate laboratory facilities, which I used for conducting the IAT's for my Master's thesis.

Most social science laboratory experiments, including the one I conducted in Hjorth (2010), use a convenience sample of college students. While often the only feasible option, it is not an ideal sample, since in a number of important respects college students do not resemble the voter population at large. However, there is an oft-overlooked alternative to student samples. Kam et al. (2007) propose sampling campus staff, who are significantly more socio-politically representative than students. Building on this idea, I will seek to recruit campus staff samples when designing and conducting my IAT experiments.

## 4.2 Demonstrating group implication using survey experiments

The *survey experiment* is a relatively modern technique in political science, introduced to the discipline by Paul Sniderman in the early 1990's (for a pioneering study, see Sniderman et al. (1991)). Yet by now, the survey experiment has become the methodological standard in framing research (Hansen, 2007). This includes testing theories of group implication.

At its simplest, the core idea behind using survey experiments to study group implication is to expose a random half of study participants to a "group implicated" presentation of a policy issue; i.e. the presentation has been subtly framed to resonate with the respondents' existing group schema. The other half of the study participants are exposed to a "neutral" presentation and act as a control group. If group implication takes place, support for the policy among participants exposed to the "group implicated" article should be associated with their feelings toward that group.

For example, Winter (2008, chap. 4) has experiment subjects read an article that frames Social Security as a symbolically 'white' program threatened by privatization. The article appeals to participants' race schema by speaking about Social Security recipients in the first person plural and implicitly cueing black stereotypes about laziness. For example, the article estimates of implicit attitudes, and so is less useful for the purpose of my project.

refers to Social Security recipients as “us in the working generation”. However, the article *does not at any point explicitly mention race*. Even so, the implicitly racial frame causes racially conservative subjects to oppose Social Security privatization. This is even more remarkable given that racial conservatives, who tend to be politically conservative, would normally support privatization. By turning the ideological distribution of support for a controversial policy on its head, the experiment demonstrates an important mechanism through which rhetoric is able to strategically forge new political coalitions.

As part of my proposed dissertation, I would conduct similar survey experiments on Danish voters, but with treatments tailored to their salient cognitive schema. The experiment would answer the question: *can issue framing alter welfare state support by implicitly cueing group schema?* The exact content of these schema is difficult to describe ex ante. We certainly should not expect welfare state group schema to be exactly like those found to be salient in the United States. Rather than a mere methodological quirk, the notion of cross-country differences in dominant group is a question of immense theoretical importance. In making explicit these differences, I believe I could benefit greatly from consulting with the Department’s faculty expertise on theories of political discourse on race, immigration and gender.

Given that the survey requires respondents to read experimentally manipulated descriptions of policies, the survey would likely be CAWI, i.e. web-based. Power calculations based on effect sizes in earlier studies suggest the study could yield significant effects even with a modest sample size of no more than 500 respondents.<sup>4</sup> Conducting a survey of this size and scope is not free or easy, but it is feasible. I have contacted a number of polling agencies, who have offered to conduct a 500-person, split-sample web-based survey for as little as 16.000 DKK (see attached written offer from *CEM Institute – Voxmeter*). This amount is modest enough that I should be able to raise internal or external funding for the survey. I have included the price of the survey in the attached budget.

### 4.3 Describing real-life group implication using automated content analysis

The two methods outlined above are designed to assess the internal validity of the theory of group implication. The third method I plan to use shifts focus to the question of *external validity*, i.e. whether the experimentally demonstrated effects can be inferred to exist in actual political life.

Traditionally, research exploring the actual use of group implication has relied on painstaking manual categorization of texts such as newspaper articles or political speeches. For example, Gilens (2000, chap. 5) and Mendelberg (2001, chap. 5) manually categorize the content of 1.256 and 1.167 newspaper articles respectively. However, due to financial and time constraints, manual coding can only cover a tiny subset of the relevant universe of texts, which could easily number in the tens of thousands. Equally importantly, because the sampling method is non-random, standard errors cannot be obtained, so the uncertainties surrounding the estimates of

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<sup>4</sup>Using Cohen’s (1988) guidelines for power analysis, conventional social science levels of significance ( $\alpha = .05$ ), statistical power ( $\beta = .8$ ) and assuming the effect size for racialization reported in Winter (2008, p. 64) ( $\ln(odds) = 1.196$ ), the required sample size for a significant result is  $n = 77$ . A more conservative calculation, assuming an effect size half as large and a higher-than-conventional level of statistical power ( $\beta = .9$ ), yields a required  $n = 424$ . Even using the conservative effect size assumption, then, it is feasible to conduct a survey of sufficient size to produce statistically significant effect estimates.

interest are unknown.

Because of these constraints, the nature and composition of media rhetoric on immigration is not empirically well-established. Needless to say, group implication is only substantially significant if group implicating rhetoric can be found in real-life political discourse rather than just as an experimentally induced artefact. I believe *automated content analysis* is a promising method for alleviating this problem. In essence, automated content analysis uses computer algorithms to estimate the content of texts, allowing researchers to analyze vast numbers of texts far beyond what is feasible using manual coding. While it cannot be expected to fully replace manual coding, automated content analysis could become a useful complement to it.

Hopkins and King (2010) develop an automated, i.e. computer-based, method of estimating the distribution of texts in different categories from the entire universe of available texts. The distinct advantage of the method is that once a sufficient number of input texts are hand-coded (estimated to be around 500), the number of texts that can be analyzed is only limited by availability. I believe this method could be useful for estimating the proportion of racialized rhetoric in Danish newspaper editorials, letters to the editor, and party leader speeches, including changes in the distribution over time. For example, it is commonly assumed that Danish tabloid newspaper coverage of immigration issues turned drastically more negative around the early 1990's. Automated content analysis could test this common assumption by, say, categorizing every Danish newspaper editorial ever published. Besides contributing to answering my research question 3, I believe this would constitute an important contribution to the study of political rhetoric and could be applied to answer related questions in numerous other areas.

## 5 Project outline

Table 1 shows a tentative timetable for my dissertation writing which, though necessarily subject to revisions, conveys my basic plan for the program.

Most importantly, I plan to write a *paper-based dissertation* consisting of at least four scientific papers each to be submitted for publication in peer-reviewed journals. The ordering of papers 1-4 in table 1 is chosen so that the most immediately approachable research design, which is partly an extension of my Master's thesis, is used in paper 1, while the survey experiment, which is somewhat less familiar, is used in papers 2 and 3. Finally, paper 4, for which data collection and analysis could present technical challenges, is placed last.

Secondly, I expect to teach two classes during the program. The classes can be accommodated to the Department's teaching needs, but two courses closely linked with my dissertation would be political psychology, an equivalent of which I took while studying at UC Berkeley, and causal inference, an equivalent of which I took while at ICPSR at the University of Michigan. Alternatively, I can teach research methods 2, with which I have considerable experience, see section 6 below.

Third, in order to improve on my methodological skills, I expect to take summer school classes. The ICPSR Summer School at the University of Michigan, where I took classes in 2009, offers a rigorous but rewarding quantitative program, and the Essex Summer School offers a diverse set of courses taught by leading scholars. I plan to take both classes directly related to my project (such as *Computer-aided Text Analysis*) as well as classes not-strictly-related (such

Table 1: Timetable for completion of Ph.D.-dissertation, 2013-2015

Year	Semester	Planned activity / deadline
2013	Spring	Teaching course: political psychology / research methods
	Summer	Design and conduct IAT experiments ICPSR Summer Program. Expected courses: <i>Methodological Issues in Quantitative Research on Race and Ethnicity</i> and <i>Applied Multilevel Models</i>
	Fall	Submission of paper 1: Implicit group attitudes in Danish voters
2014	Spring	Visiting student at top foreign university
	Summer	Design and conduct experimental survey Essex Summer School. Expected courses: <i>Case Studies</i> and <i>Computer-aided Text Analysis</i>
	Fall	Submission of paper 2: Survey experiment of group implication no. 1
2015	Spring	Teaching course: Experiments and causal inference in political science Paper presentation, MPSA Annual Conference
	Summer	Submission of paper 3: Survey experiment of group implication no. 2 Design and conduct automated content analysis
	Fall	Submission of paper 4: Automated content analysis of group cues in Danish media coverage
	December	Submission of full Ph.D.-dissertation

as *Case Studies*), but which will contribute to my general education as a researcher. Tuition and travel expenses for the summer schools are included in the attached budget.

Finally, I expect to spend one semester at a top university abroad as part of my dissertation writing. I imagine exploring the option of studying with professor Daniel Hopkins at Georgetown University, whose substantive and methodological work is an ideal match for my project. Alternatively, I would explore studying with professor Michael Tesler at Brown University, professor Nicholas Valentino at the University of Michigan, or professor Nicholas J. G. Winter at the University of Virginia, all of whom have produced top-level work closely related to my proposed topic.

My proposed dissertation entails submitting the full dissertation including at least four finalized, submitted papers in late 2015. I believe the scope of the project makes it feasible to complete within the given timeframe.

## 6 Personal qualifications

I believe I have the relevant personal qualifications to write a great dissertation. As for academic merits, I would argue my grades (B.Sc. GPA 10.6, M.Sc. GPA 12.0) testify to a high level of academic achievement. Specifically, my Bachelor's and Master's theses (grades 13 and 12 respectively) demonstrated that I can produce independent, high-quality academic work. I also believe my education has equipped me with the right theoretical and methodical tools to approach the dissertation. This includes graduate-level coursework in political psychology, linear and logistic regression and methods of causal inference at UC Berkeley and ICPSR at University of Michigan.

I also come well prepared for the teaching requirements of the Ph.D.-program. In 2008 and 2009, I was a TA in research methods 1 at the Department. And since 2011, I have been external lecturer in research methods 2, teaching a class of 40-50 second year students each week, reviewing papers and administering oral exams. Since beginning to teach, I have received very positive reviews from students (see attached student evaluations). Part of the reason is that, quite frankly, I love to teach. I would be thrilled to be able to do so on a more frequent basis as a Ph.D.-student at the Department.

Since 2010, I have been working at the Ministry of Finance. While the job content is not directly relevant to my proposed dissertation, working in central government has taught me an enormous amount about everyday government politics and policy-making, which could likely contribute to the work of other researchers at the Department. More to the point, the demands of the job have given me a far stronger work ethic and sense of professionalism than I had as a graduating student. When writing my dissertation, I will bring with me the discipline, perseverance and thoroughness that the Ministry of Finance has taught me.

## **7 Suggested advisors and relevant faculty**

The faculty advisor for my project would preferably have some experience with the dissertation's methods and subject matter. However, since my project relates to various different fields of interest, several faculty members fit this description. Associate professor Peter Thisted Dinesen has done work on social capital and ethnic tolerance closely related to my topic. Professor Kasper Møller Hansen has done extensive work on political methodology and opinion formation, and has extensive experience conducting framing experiments, a method central to my project. Associate professor Carina Bischoff advised my Master's thesis, several themes from which extend into my proposed dissertation. Professor Peter Kurrild-Klitgaard has relevant expertise in opinion formation and American politics. I know all of the above from time as a student and my work as external lecturer, and I am confident that each would provide me with the requisite academic and personal guidance throughout my proposed project.

Among the remaining faculty, my project is related to the work of Asmus Leth Olsen, with whom I have worked before, Bolette Danckert, whose project explores a topic similar to mine using a different methodological approach, as well as Yosef Bhatti and Rasmus Fonnesbæk Andersen, who work with quantitative approaches to opinion formation and political participation. Finally, as suggested above, I intent to draw on the extensive faculty expertise in the theory and methods of discourse analysis for the parts of my project that revolve around the rhetoric of group implication. Throughout the program, I intend for my project to enriched by, and in turn itself contribute to, the intellectual life of the Department.

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