Slipping and Sliding: Wielding Power with Slippery Constructions of Danishness

Mira C. Skadegård

Abstract: This article addresses implicit and underlying discrimination in public and private interactions in Denmark. In particular, it examines racial structural discrimination in regard to citizenship and belonging in Danish contexts. Two cases are presented in this analysis, both from the fall of 2015, in which mixed race figures either directly or indirectly. The first case is a public debate concerning Danish citizenship as presented in news coverage and the second is an everyday private interaction at a dinner party in which the author was a participant. The study assesses how (racialized) Danishness, citizenship, and entitlement are constructed in the two cases. Further, it introduces the notion of "slipperiness" as a mechanism in discriminatory interactions (in regard to defining "Danishness") and discusses how this notion functions to maintain and enforce racial discrimination.

Keywords: racially mixed people, multiracial identity, mixed race identity, mixed race studies, critical mixed race studies, Nordic

---

Introduction

> I am not willing to give people citizenship that *I don't think should have citizenship*.
>
> — IS, case 1, emphasis added

> Islam does not fit within a democracy. These folks are not real Danes. They are like you—they have *foreign genes*!
>
> — K, case 2, emphasis added

The above quotations are from two cases I employ in this article to illustrate and discuss structural discrimination and its manifestation in Danish contexts. Both cases involve and exemplify some of the concerns and underlying assumptions in the Danish political and social context about citizenship. Both involve race and racialization either implicitly or explicitly and therefore have relevance for mixed race and mixed heritage in regard to Danish citizenship, entitlement, and belonging.

Case 1 concerns a widely publicized government decision to deny or retract citizenship from individuals already approved for citizenship. The second case is a conversation that took place during a private dinner party held by me. The dinner took place a few weeks after the first case, and, I argue, mirrors

rationales and perspectives in case 1. Using these cases, I look at how individual conversations and interactions express and enact sentiments and assumptions that occur in the broader context of Danish public and political discourses. In particular, I address negotiation and definition of Danishness, Danish citizenship, and entitlement.

I suggest that evasive, opaque constructions of Danishness are in play in both cases. These draw on implicit understandings of Danishness as a particular form of Whiteness, which is deeply linked to historical/colonial, biological, and ideological notions of race. Further, I suggest that such constructions of Danishness are, in themselves, slippery, as is the power to define them. That is, the power to define and determine Danishness is situated in the hands of the majority, and slipperiness keeps it there.[1] An element of this slipperiness is that it is defined by negation. Negotiation of Danishness functions to point to (and reject) all that is considered *not* Danish, while evading designating specific criteria for what *is* Danish. Rather than make that which constitutes Danishness explicit and clear, it remains shrouded in inference. The cases illustrate how this definitional slipperiness makes it possible for criteria that constitute Danishness to be malleable. They can change according to the whim of the (majoritized) definer. This slipperiness, I suggest, functions as a mechanism through which Danishness is held out of reach for mixed and other racialized subjectivities.

Using two illustrative cases, I argue that slipperiness is a mechanism that is in play in negotiations and articulations that pertain to citizenship, belonging, and integration. These become vessels for everyday, normative, racially discriminatory perspectives to gain or maintain ground and reproduce colonial and nationalist ideas of Danishness and racialized Others, perpetuating inequality, racial discrimination, and racism. Such slipperiness functions to retain power, perpetuate White supremacist notions of Danish identity, and maintain racialized structures of inequality. It also functions to destabilize the positions of non-White, (mixed) Danes.

I begin with a discussion of structural discrimination and some background for the use of this term. I then briefly discuss critical mixed race studies and the Danish context, followed by a description of my analytical framework, methodology, and research position. Thereafter, I present the cases. The final section explores some of the themes that arise in both cases.

Theoretical and Analytical Framework

Structural Discrimination

Explorations of race and racialization, ethnicity, identity, and dynamics of marginalization are becoming more mainstream in Nordic and European research. For example, studies on media, education, public debate, and everyday issues address racism as a systemic and structural problem in a number of contexts.[2] Explicit focus on structural discrimination as distinct from racism and institutional discrimination, however, is less common. Structural discrimination is specifically described in non-Nordic sociological work, mental health and psychological research, and philosophical and legal studies.[3] In addition, several country reports examine structural discrimination.[4] The term, however, is often used synonymously (or conflated) with institutional discrimination and/or structural racism.

As I employ it, structural discrimination is not interchangeable with racism. A central difference is that it infers a human rights–situated understanding of discrimination as an action (often punishable by law) and, consequently, distinct from racism as connected to motivation or ideology.[5] Structural racial discrimination is, however, similar to systemic and institutional understandings of racism in that it is defined as hegemonic (re)production and maintenance of beliefs and constructions that underscore the more specific, explicit discriminatory and racist actions, structures, and systems that inflect everyday interactions. Structural discrimination is a framework in which micro-discrimination and other forms of subtle, difficult to address, underlying discrimination is naturalized, embedded, normalized, and expressed.[6] It includes the gray zone between acknowledged and/or legally recognized discrimination and unacknowledged discrimination: That is, where constructions and assumptions congeal, or sediment, into unquestioned (discriminatory) truths.[7]

Racism and discrimination are part of, and embedded within, everyday structures and norms.[8] This enables and produces witting and unwitting complicity in racism and discrimination.[9] These dynamics are also central to the critical mixed race paradigm. In critical mixed race studies, focus is similarly on subtle and underlying assumptions in everyday interactions, which come to their expression in such forms as racial microaggressions.[10]

While research on mixed race is hardly new, critical mixed race studies, as a recognized and distinct field, is a more recent development.[11] Like structural discrimination and racism research, critical mixed race studies addresses deeply rooted and historical challenges central to questions of race and racialization. While constructions of mixed race vary according to specific histories and regions, they are addressed and conceptualized differently in US contexts than, for example, in Brazil.[12] Similarly, the challenges and constructions of race, racialization, and mixed race in Danish contexts, which is the framework within which mixed race is addressed in this article, are specific to Denmark, while also sharing dynamics with other contexts. However, in the Danish context, there has been little or no comparable exploration of mixed race such as that in the United States or elsewhere.

Further, Danish national narratives, such as Danish exceptionalism, influence public perceptions of Danishness as inherently non-racist, such that even direct colonial residue and racism remain widely unacknowledged.[13] In recent years, newer Danish research and growing public awareness have given rise to contrary narratives recognizing racism and colonialism. Simultaneously, however, as in other parts of Europe, explicit racism and discrimination are increasingly prevalent. One example is explicit racism that is legitimized via misinterpretations of the right to freedom of expression (for the majoritized), also known as entitlement racism.[14]

In the Danish context, people of color make up a small percentage (approximately 8 percent) of the population. Of these, some have immigrant backgrounds, some have adoptive backgrounds, and only a few are from the African diaspora. Unlike the United States, descendants of (acknowledged) enslaved persons have become more or less invisible. There are few reliable statistics, and of these, the categorizations themselves present a wide array of concerns due to inherently discriminatory categorization practices. Further, Danishness is widely articulated, and understood implicitly, as equivalent with Whiteness.[15] Monoracial terminology and gestures that sweep non-Whites into generic and undifferentiated categories are common practice.[16] An example is terminology for non-White people who are reflexively assumed to be immigrants and/or their descendants. Terms for a first-, second-, or third-generation non-Western immigrant heritage

(*indvandrer*, *anden/tredje-generationsinvandrer*) are normalized and generally go unquestioned. These conflate many persons of color into one category of otherness (in opposition to a shared notion of Whiteness as well as Danishness) and draw on colonial notions of difference (non-Western) in everyday conceptualizations.[17] At the same time, conceptualizations of mixed race are also normalized. A common example is the word *Mulat* (mulatto), which is widely used to describe persons of mixed race, indicating how race continues to function as a structuring concept.

Despite Denmark's colonial history and its growing multiracial and mixed population, denial (and erasure) of race, racism, and discrimination as relevant concerns contribute to these remaining underexplored areas of study in Denmark, and critical mixed race studies even more so. To be clear, in this article, "mixed" is understood in terms of (racialized) micro-diversity and complex identity, including persons of mixed heritage.[18] This includes those who may have partial or full non-Danish heritage yet are Danish by birth, as well as those connected to colonial and neocolonial heritage/relations, naturalization, adoption, immigration, and so forth.

Mixed in Denmark

Being mixed in Denmark, in my own experience, is regularly met with exotification or expectations about personal struggle based on assumptions that conflate race with culture/heritage. That is, non-Whiteness is assumed to be non-Danish and culturally different, regardless of (Danish) nationality, birth, or upbringing. Consequently, race is often conflated with other parameters, such as culture, belief, and religion. This is perhaps a central difference to mixed race as it may be understood in some American contexts where being mixed may not necessarily be connected to nationality.

I have Indian and Danish heritage, and I was born in Denmark, though I grew up in the United States. I identify as American but also as Danish and as Indian. I neither find this to be conflicting nor do I identify via race, though I am regularly racialized. I am sometimes categorized as *Mulat*, sometimes *indvandrer*, or pejorative derivatives of that term. I am regularly subject to racial microaggressions and micro-discrimination. Some of these are exemplified in this article. Other instances include majoritized Danes who struggle to find a suitable definition (racial/ethnic explanation) for what I am. My experience in terms of being met with racializing practices, microaggressions, and micro-discrimination resonates with everyday interactions and experiences described by the informants in my research, as well as literature on the subject.[19]

While "mixed" commonly refers to race, the ambiguities and complexity of race bring other factors into the equation.[20] Race, for example, is intertwined with social class, age, gender, and much more. In my case, being mixed is about race as well as other parameters. That is, I have a particular range of experience, socialization, and access, as well as multiple belongings and affiliations.[21] This complexity of position means that I am racialized yet simultaneously immersed within privilege and Danishness (through network, family, context, lifestyle, and history)—a leg in each, so to speak, and with access to the codes, underlying meanings, and frames of reference of Whiteness, while simultaneously also positioned as outside of Whiteness and Danishness. I am privy to thoughts, fears, and entitlements connected to White Danishness, while also having deep and comprehensive experience with being the racialized Other.[22] I am further privileged by my educational and academic status that provides an authority in certain social contexts, which many positioned outside such social and academic privilege do not have access to. My

non-Whiteness, combined with my social position, seems to cause dissonance in regard to racialized social expectations.

Race in Denmark

In addition to structural discrimination and the critical mixed race paradigm, the discourse-analytical approach employed in this article draws on several theoretical and methodological frameworks. A driving premise is that racially discriminatory constructs are intertwined with historical frameworks. How race is constructed, understood, and structured in Denmark, as well as elsewhere, is a residue of this shared history.[23] However, Denmark—with its particular colonial past and present and concurrent, perhaps strategic, amnesia about this history—is an interesting case.[24] Danish colonizing practices took place primarily (though not exclusively) outside its geographical borders. That is, most enslavement, exploitation, and commerce involving enslaved persons and their labor occurred outside the country. This rendered much racist and colonial practice less visible than, say, on the American continent. In addition, Scandinavian ideologies of equality, certain religious and historical narratives, and the lack of legalized racist practices, such as apartheid in South Africa or Jim Crow in the United States, contributed to upholding Danish and Scandinavian self-perceptions as not racist.[25]

Explicit racial practices, for example, exhibitions in the early 1900s of racialized persons (in cages) in zoos and amusement parks, as well as Scandinavia's central role in the development of eugenics and racial hygiene theory, notwithstanding, Danish colonialism has been subject to a form of national erasure and amnesia.[26] Though colonial residue remains imbricated within language, structures, and cultural and everyday artifacts, Danish colonialism remains widely unacknowledged. This is so even despite Denmark's continuing colonial relationship to Greenland.[27]

As is the case elsewhere, Danish material realities may have changed outward form or political structure. However, they continue to mirror colonial dynamics, such as dominant constructions of race, racialized dominant and subordinate social and political groupings, and discrimination and racism in everyday contexts. This colonial residue remains influential and formative in contemporary attitudes and beliefs. An example is the continued insistence on using racializing terms, such as *N*ger* (N*gro) and *Mulat*, in Danish public debate and everyday language.[28] Another example is the practice of categorizing racialized Danes with presumed immigrant heritage as *anden/tredje-generationsindvandrer* (second-/third-generation immigrant). These words indicate the continuing salience of race as a significant marker of difference and reflect assumptions about belonging within Danishness. At the same time, Danish exceptionalism, in the shape of presumptions about Denmark as post-racial or color-blind, juxtaposes the emphasis on race with denial of its importance.[29]

Analytical Framework

The described theoretical framework is a lens through which to understand the role of certain underlying power frameworks and allows for an expansion into social structures and micro-processes.[30] Using this framework, I explore the following two cases to illustrate how discrimination is embedded in

social and institutional practices and micro-processes in interactions across perceived difference, and how these are inscribed in broader social (macro) dynamics and practices: that is, how dynamics in micro-processes—such as specific interactions between individuals—draw on broader social norms and legitimizing structures.

The cases are not comprehensive nor are they necessarily representative. They are, however, illustrative. Both draw on similar structures. Both delineate how structural discrimination inflects and underscores rationales of racialized national belonging. The cases, while taken from my particular range of experience and research focus, are not unique. Cases exhibiting racialized notions with regard to material objects and artifacts and discourses on race and otherness are plentiful in the Danish context.[31]

As in any research, research position is central and formative.[32] While personal, eclectic, and anecdotal experience is complicated and perhaps a contentious choice of material in academic work, the use of personal anecdote in case 2 serves to exemplify themes that are central to my research. As I discuss below, case 2 draws on concerns and struggles around constructions of Danishness as mechanisms to maintain a particular racialized construction of nationality. Because the case reflects in such detail, and so explicitly, some of the issues in the broader public sphere, it seemed too good not to use.

Because both cases are plucked from my own context, position plays an explicit role. As a researcher and practitioner in the field for over twenty years, as well as being both external to and centered within Danishness, my experience is unique.[33] Furthermore, my own mixedness plays a role in the production of the dinner party narrative (case 2). I am explicitly exemplified in the story, imbricated as participant, host, and observer. It is my narrative and experience that construe the story. The dinner case cannot be strictly construed as memory work.[34] It falls more under the category of participant observation or even self-ethnography, in that I wrote down and documented the dinner party experience the same evening it took place, choosing to see the experience as potential material for analysis.[35]

While I draw on auto- and self-ethnography approaches, what I hope to emphasize are the discourses, language, and issues exemplified. The cases reflect how certain words and concepts are normalized, underlying, and implemented. In case 2, my participation and coproduction of the case as a memory of a personal experience carries more auto-ethnographic weight than in case 1. Case 1 is rather personal, and my own role has particular influence and meaning. It may even be the instigator of the described interchange. What I hope to direct attention to, however, is how the incident illustrates particular dynamics of structural discrimination.

I would also point out that questioning a minoritized researcher's imbrication, or the validity of the analysis and choice of material due to a researcher's skin color, origin, gender, and sexuality, is hardly uncommon and could be read as a way of enforcing patriarchal and supremacist gestures.[36] Like Derald Wing Sue, I argue that minoritized positions may have a different, perhaps keener, access and awareness of issues that might not be available to a person without experience of the field.[37] This notion, I argue, can also be applied to research. Further, paranoia regarding the minoritized researcher reflects a troubling assumption that a majoritized position could be neutral.[38]

There will always be challenges when a field of study overlaps with a researcher's position and experience, which is often also the case.[39] As I see it, to imagine objectivity in research is to live a myth. It is, among other things, this myth I must write to when I address my position as a researcher. I can only

research what I have the impulsion to research and try to remain aware—knowing that I cannot fully know—all of the potential perspectives that, necessarily, escape me.

Case 1: Citizenship as Reward

Case 1 arose in the wake of the newly elected government and its implementation of more restrictive immigration and naturalization policies in 2014. For immigrants and descendants of immigrants, there are particular processes for achieving citizenship. Applicants must live up to a set of criteria, including taking a citizenship test and a language test, and pledging allegiance to the Danish state, society, laws, and legal principles.

Before the 2014 elections, approximately 2,400 applicants had been approved for citizenship. After the elections, however, the newly elected government announced that it would reassess these decisions and applications in light of a more restrictive immigration and citizenship policy and assessment process. People who had already gone through a comprehensive process, and had been approved, would not be guaranteed their citizenship. While this may appear extreme, it is indicative of a political and public climate of increasingly explicit racism and antagonism toward immigrants, Muslims, and mixed persons in Denmark.[40] In the controversy that arose in regard to retracting approvals of citizenship, Inger Støjberg, the minister of Foreigners, Integration, and Housing at the time, was cited in the national daily newspaper *Politiken* as follows:

> For me, citizenship is *something you earn*, so that's why there are requirements for those who are going to be Danish citizens. You choose Danish citizenship, *you really have to want to be Danish*.
>
> I am not willing to give people citizenship that *I don't think should have citizenship*. And yes, there has been a long process, and that is unfortunate, but this has to be seen in light of *citizenship as something very special*. And now that there is a new parliament, there is also a new majority, and I think that should be respected.[41]

In connection with the reassessments of citizenship, the case of a young man was singled out. The person in question was born and raised in Denmark. He had immigrant heritage and presented as non-White. It also appears that he was read as Muslim. His (allegedly) extreme opinions had been expressed some years prior to his application for citizenship. In the news coverage, politicians (and the media) referred to him by name. To keep him (and others) from attaining citizenship the rules were changed. He was deemed undeserving of—and was thus denied—the citizenship he had already been approved for. The retraction was based on allegations that he held (and expressed) beliefs that were found to be *un-Danish*. For example, the Conservative Party politician Naser Khader, who was apparently instrumental in bringing attention to this young man and his professed unsuitability for citizenship, was quoted in a newspaper as saying:

> That whole package [the young man's background and presumed beliefs] collides with getting Danish citizenship, especially the loyalty oath, where all applicants pledge their loyalty to Danish society and its *fundamental values*.
>
> I don't think *we should reward him* with citizenship. We should reward those that contribute positively to this society, those who are law-abiding and respect *fundamental democratic values*.

Leif Mikkelsen, from the Liberal Alliance Party, spoke in a similar vein:

> It so happens that this guy, in public, has shown that he doesn't support the values that a legal state is based on, and we will simply not be part of giving citizenship to extremists and people that have openly shown that they don't *have respect for Danish society*.[42]

Case 2: The Dinner Party

Approximately six weeks after case 1, I held a dinner party. During the evening, conversation rounded recent (November 2015) terror attacks in Paris and concerns about refugees. In the course of the discussion, a guest, I will call him K, expressed concerns about being "overrun" with foreigners, about millions of people flooding into Europe, and Denmark in particular. He went on to describe his fear that the Danish nation was "disappearing." This influx (the one already in place, and the potential one), he suggested, would mean that (non-Western, that is, non-White) foreigners would "take over." He was of the opinion that these newcomers would influence the nation in ways that would undermine Danishness and Danish values.

To illustrate his views, K referred to an incident he had experienced some years before. He and his wife lived in a house on (or near) the beach in an affluent neighborhood. When they went for a swim on the private beach, he described people (he called them foreigners) who were grilling and picnicking at the public beach facilities nearby. He said these picnickers would "stare us down." He continued, "It was really unpleasant, we felt threatened, we stopped going to the beach." K assumed the picnickers disapproved of his "Danish way of life." He suggested that they disapproved of his wife wearing a bikini and their use of the beach. It was not clear why a general use of the beach would serve as an affront, but to K, this seemed self-evident.

As this discussion progressed, I was confounded. I felt what could best be defined as a sense of cognitive dissonance.[43] I simply could not believe what I was hearing from a guest in my own home. To my ears, K expressed hostility and distrust of people apparently based on their skin color, class, and religion (the inference to disapproval of the bikini inferring assumptions about Muslims). Yet I was incredulous. How could anyone say things like this *at my table*? These were friends and colleagues of my husband (a human rights and business specialist). K himself was the partner of a colleague in the human rights and business field. All the guests were aware of my own work as a discrimination researcher. Two of us (one of the guests and I) were racially minoritized (non-White), while the rest were racially majoritized (White). I had mistakenly presumed a sense of shared perspective and sensitivity on these issues. Further, common

decency (our shared frame of reference, class background, implicit social codes) would dictate that he rein such opinions in when in this context. I thought I must somehow have heard him incorrectly.

I did not.

I fished for explanations in my mind. As the conversation unfolded, I wondered if other narratives could apply to the situation. Might there be an issue of privileged access to private beaches versus less privileged, restricted access through public facilities? Were they staring (if they were staring) because they were envious or curious about this access?

Since there was apparently no verbal communication between the picnickers and K, was the presence of the racialized Other, in itself, enough to make K feel uncomfortable? And if so, why? Were K's assumptions about these "foreigners" (defined only by appearance) a possible projection of his own state of mind? Did K stare first? Could the discomfort be incurred by expressions or attitudes he himself exuded? Perhaps K's physical type and demeanor seemed intimidating or reminiscent of what is sometimes associated with supremacist positionalities. He was very white and bald in a way that could be read as shaven. To my eye, K did not have an inviting or warm appearance. Of course, this is my own perspective. Clearly, my own social, economic, academic, racial, gendered, class, and other positions play a role in my interpretation. I cannot say for certain, but I have my doubts that such thoughts crossed K's mind. I did not ask. I was the host, in a state of stunned disbelief, and dealing with what Sue defines as "attributional ambiguity."[44] That is, I was trying to navigate in my mind whether K's words were attributable to racism, discrimination, or class, or whether I had misinterpreted.

I had not.

During the course of the conversation, K pontificated on the dangers of allowing Muslims and racialized Others the right to vote in Denmark. Still flummoxed, trying not to *over*react, and attempting to insert my own perspective into the conversation, I pointed out to K that if people voted, they were likely to be citizens participating in democratic processes. K responded by saying that Islam could not fit within a democracy. He added that these folks were not "real Danes." They, he said—and then he pointed to me—were like me. They had "foreign genes." Therefore, they were un-Danish and should not have the same rights as Danes with "Danish genes." He then inferred that I was an example of this disappearing Danishness, a symptom of the influx (flooding) of foreign genes. I noted that the only reason K could deem to know anything about my genes was by virtue of my skin color. There was no way for him to know anything about my (or other people of color's) heritage, religion, nationality, ethnicity, or opinions.

I responded further, saying that using genes as an argument here made it sound like K believed non-Whites were not really Danish and should not have the same rights as (White) Danes. K did not disagree. I then pointed out (without sarcasm—because I was genuinely kerfluffled) that, since religious freedom and freedom from racial discrimination are protected rights in Denmark, it would not actually be democratic if only White non-Muslims could vote. I also said something along the lines of, "If you exchange the word 'foreigner' or 'Muslim' with the word 'Jew'—you sound exactly like the national socialists of the 30s and 40s." K found the comparison preposterous and was visibly angered by the suggestion. This caused the already challenged dinner party ambience to decline even further.

Besides my own response, only my (White) partner openly disagreed with K, albeit without gusto. K's partner, who I imagine to be somewhat versed in discrimination as a human rights colleague, said

nothing to counter him. What caused this tepid response is hard to say. Perhaps, like me, my partner was in disbelief. Perhaps, as a host, he was unable to find a suitable response. K's own partner (they were newly married) may have been surprised as well. The other White male guest also remained passive, saying very little, and his racially minoritized partner said nothing. Perhaps gender, power, and ego played some role in the resounding silence. Needless to say, the dinner left a lasting impression.

Cases 1 and 2: Slippery Constructions and Structural Discrimination

Danishness: A Slippery, Unclear Business

Both cases illustrate, or make tangible, certain patterns and shared racialized understandings in regard to Danishness, citizenship, and belonging. Each case disputes the Danishness (entitlement/belonging) of racialized and mixed persons. The young man in case 1 is Danish in the sense that he identifies as Danish (seeks citizenship) and has grown up in Denmark, though the circumstances of his birth are not entirely clear. In case 2 the discussion centers on me, a person racially mixed by virtue of White and non-White parentage, as well as in terms of cultural heritage. In both cases, Danishness is defined in opaque terms and via negation: what Danishness is *not*. This ambiguity allows for differing content to be attributed to Danishness depending on, among other things, the whim of the definer. In the cases, descriptions and allusions to Danishness range from Danishness as explicitly premised on race (in the dinner party case) to differing attempts to attribute Danishness to a set of implicit values, a particular democratic way of thinking. Subjective and affective determination of citizenship and Danishness is also described in, for example, Asta Smedegaard Nielsen's work on highly publicized deportation cases in which certain racialized persons are seen as particularly deserving of citizenship.[45]

In case 1, Khader (one of the politicians) described the contested young man as a "package" that represents a presumed set of beliefs.[46] He argued that the young man's assumed scruples or character stood in contrast to "Danish society and its fundamental values." To contextualize a bit, Khader was likely referring to controversial comments aired by the young man as a teenager. These comments were at the core of the dispute regarding the young man's right to citizenship. Khader argued that the young man was not aligned with Danishness, framed as Danish society and fundamental values. He inferred, by saying this, a unique understanding of Danishness (as Danish society and fundamental values). While the exact components of these values are not exactly clear, he implied a shared, or common, implicit understanding of what this meant. As a result, the reader may attribute their own subjective content to Khader's words, and in this way conclude that they (Khader and a potential reader) have a similar understanding of Danishness.

Similarly, Mikkelsen (case 1), with reference to the young man's previous public comments, suggested that citizenship should not be allotted to a person who lacks respect for Danish society and the values a legal state is based on. He did not define *what was meant* by respect and *how* the notion of Danish society was understood. The notions are open to imagined shared understandings and subjective interpretations. Additionally, Mikkelsen's reference to values falls within this same line of diffuse notions. A "legal state" exists in a wide range of forms. If Mikkelsen (and Khader) was referring to the Danish state

(which is the most likely possibility here), and its legal foundation, his point becomes contradictory. Danish legal structures rest on explicitly defined rights, such as freedom of speech, expression, thought, religion, and opinion. Mikkelsen (and others), however, argued for denying the young man rights on the basis of his expressed (and presumed) opinions and beliefs.

Støjberg described citizenship as something she *gave* people. The criteria seem to include her personal opinion. As she said, she would not bestow citizenship on those *she did not think deserved it*. This takes both subjectivity and the opaqueness of the right to Danishness a step further. Not only did she move the right to citizenship out of a legal framework (or language), she made it personal. Støjberg described citizenship as something special, something that must be earned, and something one really must want. How this translates into rules for attainable and applicable access to citizenship is not clear. Clearly, when citizenship and belonging are placed within the realm of a person's desire or willingness to give, the landscape of the discussion changes. The citations raise such questions as: What is meant by special? When has citizenship been earned? Which standards are being implemented? What does "really want(ing) to be Danish" look like? Can any of these notions be constructed as formalized criteria for citizenship?

The concerns and critiques that politicians in case 1 described illustrate several challenges. One of these, as mentioned, is how Danish citizenship and belonging are explicitly connected to power (the power to bestow or deny). Citizenship is framed as contingent on the benevolence of those in power.

As I have discussed in other work, benevolence involves a particular, asymmetric interaction.[47] There is a giver and a receiver. Giving is predicated on the ability and power to do so, and receiving infers that the beneficiary requires help (is in need) and is without similar power.

Further, the inherent inequality between the benefactor and the beneficiary maintains asymmetry and positions the receiver as beholden to (unequal/unable to critique) the provider.[48]
While this, in itself, is not surprising, what is interesting is the explicitly benevolent, and as a result powered, discourse in which Danishness is understood as a gift or reward. It is described as something bestowed on those deemed worthy. However, notions of worthiness rely on a system or hierarchy. For someone to be worthy, someone else is not. Not only are individuals subject to comparative value, or standards of worth, but Danishness is also presented as superior to other communities of belonging. It is construed as an exclusive club in which one must be deemed acceptable, and in which Whiteness (and non-Muslimness) is a (nearly) unspoken criteria. In this case, the discussion is mainly directed toward persons of color (non-Western). Therefore, this resonates with colonialist and racist ideologies of European cultural, moral, and intellectual superiority.[49] Everyday Danish frameworks continue to frame "non-Western" states and persons as inferior. Such a notion of Danishness as having a higher value, presumably, than "non-Western" belongings also underscores the inherently racist undertones of the discourse the politicians here drew on.[50]

In addition to the challenges inherent in colonialist, nationalist, and raced narratives of Danish superiority, the construction and elusiveness of Danishness (and citizenship) in case 1 places legal and institutional Danishness on a slippery slope. It is made contingent on seemingly malleable, individual, and unreliable criteria. Rules and regulations, official processes, or other mechanisms of the state as institution are shown to be (or made) conditional, depending on the whims, opinions, or subjective sensibility of those in power. When statements draw on affective interpretations of, for example, *wanting*, *feeling*, and

specialness, it pushes Danishness just outside the reach of those who seek to claim or attain it.[51] Or rather, it remains *within the grasp* of those who define and redefine it such that it remains *outside the grasp* of those who may seek it.

Belonging and citizenship are framed as something one attains with the approval, help, or willingness of those in a position to be able to bestow it. Danishness does not rely on formalized or objective criteria but on individual, subjective, and opaque processes subject to benevolence and individual affect. When framed in the terms of this case, knowledge of what citizenship entails and requires is shrouded and inaccessible. It remains in the power (head) of the definer/bestower. This also reflects what Benedict Anderson describes when he discusses the notion of nation as an imagined community, fraternity, or comradeship. Inclusion in this community is predicated on its separateness from other communities, albeit loosely defined.[52] Exclusion is a prerequisite. Case 1 suggests that the community is a framework of belonging in which the group can expel those deemed unfit or unlikeable (unworthy). When the criteria remain shrouded, as they do here, race and religion become (barely) unspoken parameters that validate expulsion.

Despite having lived up to regulations, paid dues, and taken tests, and (in many cases) being and feeling Danish, belonging and achieving recognized, acknowledged, or legal Danishness is a question of whether persons in power *want* to bestow that status. These politicians position themselves as (or are) arbiters of sovereign power; they stand in for normative, shared, discursively produced forms of truth or knowledge.[53] They are both a projection of this power and a manifestation of it in relational form. These individual, powered positions speaking similarly in ways that create specific exclusions of particular, raced bodies reify racially inflected discourses of exclusion, taking imagined notions of fraternity or state hostage in the attempt to wield power and (re)produce the White nation. Their desire becomes power when they can construct the state or nation as ephemeral or diffuse, something they claim to *know* but do not explicitly define. Further, even though the individuals in question in both cases have attained the right to citizenship, rules and whims change, and citizenship can be revoked or granted, ostensibly due to what persons in power *feel*.[54] This undermines the nation-state as a reliable, transparent democratic entity.

Racism at Dinner

While the citizenship case revolves around official/legal attainment of citizenship or naturalization, the dinner party context negotiates Danishness in more informal, everyday terms. Where the politicians drew on slightly shrouded colonialist and racist themes, K was more straightforward. He shared his explicit framings of (un)Danishness during the meal, including specific criteria he associated with being Danish. For example, he explicitly described genes (Whiteness) as an indicator of true Danishness. K drew on widely shared myths or stereotypical images of blond, blue-eyed, Aryan appearances connected to the Scandinavian/Danish imaginary.[55] This narrative is also central to exclusion processes and dynamics in which non-White Danes remain perpetual foreigners, regardless of their Danish heritage.[56] As a result, K drew on shared discourses, exposing tacit racist logics.

Although freedom of religion is an explicit right in Denmark, K implemented religion as a parameter for Danishness. Disregarding Danish mores of religious freedom, he argued that Danishness and

Islam are incompatible. His perspective reflects political and public discourse in Danish contexts at the time. For example, politicians and other public figures explicitly and openly denigrate "non-Western" persons in general, and Muslims in particular, framing them as a challenge to (or incongruous with) Danish culture and practices. Such sentiments are also found more generally in everyday Danish contexts.[57] The citizenship case, similarly, construes the young man as a threat due to his (presumed) extremist Muslim beliefs.

K's assumptions express a neo-racist conflation of non-Whiteness with Islam, which conforms with stereotypes.[58] Further, K described Islam, or being Muslim, with being essentially undemocratic. He added that Muslims "should not be allowed to vote" or participate in Danish democratic processes. His presumption was that Muslims think differently than Danes. K employed a widely shared opposition in which Danish (nationality) and Muslim (religion) are constructed as a (false) binary. Such racist binary categorization infers that Danish and Muslim cannot be the same. That is, one cannot be Muslim and Danish at the same time. It appears that K reflexively linked Whiteness to Danishness, non-Whiteness to being Muslim, and White Danishness to democracy. He further conflated nationality or national identity (White Danishness) with being essentially democratic, positing that Islam is antithetical to, and somehow undermines or threatens, Danishness *and* democracy.

Such contentions rest on neo-racist reasoning. K's othering and exclusionary gestures are not uncommon in Danish and Nordic public discourse.[59] The assertions K drew on simulate arguments in the citizenship case where race and religion tacitly underscore the proposed refusal of citizenship. In both scenarios, Danishness was associated with a certain implicit set of values or (democratic) way of thinking. Both situations drew on similar rationales, discourses, and gestures regarding Danishness. Both involved negotiations around Danishness and exclusionary practices as reflected in the exertion of power from everyday positions of White privilege and nationalist rhetorical frameworks and legally situated positions of normative or political power.

Denial

In addition to K's surprisingly candid racism was his similarly confounding denial. He was clearly offended when I pointed out that his words mirrored Nazi rhetoric. While denial is part and parcel of negotiations around discrimination, it seemed curious to so blatantly deny racism while simultaneously using an explicitly racist framework (genes, religion) to exclude individuals from national belonging.[60] K's juxtapositioning of an overtly racist agenda with consternation at being called out presents an interesting contradiction. As Sue and others note, acknowledging discrimination and racism often collides with self-perception.[61] Racism and discrimination often exist alongside their simultaneous denial.[62] While this was certainly a possible element, it seemed that perhaps something more was going on.

How was it possible to refer to genes, infer skin color as a parameter of national belonging, yet simultaneously deny the violence and explicit racism and discrimination of such a position? K's reaction to being called out, coupled with his willingness to express racially discriminatory beliefs at the dinner party more generally, suggests that he genuinely did not interpret his position as notably racist or discriminatory.

Certainly, this suggests a paradox or dissonance in regard to identification, definition, or recognition of racial discrimination.

While my own position (woman of color, discrimination researcher) provides ample grounds for me to interpret and understand K's words as racist and violent, it is possible that K's position, experience, and knowledge provide a different basis from which to address discrimination. Perhaps K's majoritized position (White, cis, privileged, male) meant that his horizon was fundamentally different from mine, so much so that it simply did not include the experiential ability (or willingness) to understand or recognize racial discrimination.

One might argue that K had an investment in denial. Discrimination rests on certain premises. It infers that some groups and individuals are unfairly denied rights and access, while others are not. That is, those privileged within discriminatory frameworks are likely to benefit from a structurally or systemically discriminatory framework. As a result, their privilege (that is, class, success, good fortune) is not necessarily a result of their efforts and abilities alone, but also a result of the way the system is skewed in their favor. This grates against Scandinavian ideologies of equality, as well as shared tendencies to perceive oneself as basically good or decent.[63]

It is possible that K genuinely reproduced the normative understandings widely shared in Danish contexts in which national narratives and an ideology of equality have precedence (and maintain a violent dominance) over the many conflicting experiences of non-White Danes. Perhaps his own self-image was invested in being a good person, foreclosing the option of seeing himself as racist.[64] Or perhaps K was simply unapologetically supremacist, which speaks to the widespread normalization of explicit and overt discrimination. It is also possible that all of these possibilities coexist, making for a social and cognitive dissonance I had trouble negotiating.

As for the other individuals at the dinner, I cannot know why they did not protest. Nor do I know how they felt because I did not have the presence of mind to ask them. Perhaps they, too, experienced dissonance and discomfort, even shock. It is also possible that they did not find K particularly abrasive because he reflected widely shared opinions that are normalized and legitimized within the public debate.

Genes

K's (nearly) uncontested words suggest that position(s) played a role in the dinner table interaction. Presenting as White, male, and privileged appears to produce K as a dominant subject within the hegemonic framework. K spoke about and defined Danishness from an assumed position of authority.[65] Drawing on (or standing in for) the sovereign subject, he referred to a shared, tacit understanding of Danishness as White.[66] K made note of people's genes as proof of their non-Danishness. Consequently, race marks—or stigmatizes—non-White persons as outsiders without claim to Danishness.[67] Not presenting as White is made oppositional and incongruous with Danishness.

If, as K stated, Danishness is defined by Whiteness, and the ability to identify non-Danishness via physical markers, what about mixed Danes—that is, those who, despite K's words and broader exclusionary discourses, are non-White while also Danish? As discussed above, conflating Whiteness with Danishness does not mirror the reality of a racially (somewhat) diverse Danish population, which includes

people of color by virtue of birth, immigration, colonialism, transracial adoption, and so forth.[68] Many Danes, or people who could potentially identify as Danish, may or may not present as White.[69] Where do they stand? Regardless of whether they identify as Danish or not, what about the right to be Danish—or nationality by naturalization or birth as Danish? I should emphasize that this line of thought is not directed toward reinforcing nation-state ideology. Nor am I trying to suggest that Danishness is a status to which one should aspire. Rather, I am interested in entitlement: the right to identify as Danish, the right to a legal status, the right to belong, and most importantly, the right to freedom from racial discrimination.

K's perspective made clear that, in his eyes, I and the other non-White dinner guest, as well as Muslims, among others, would not qualify as Danish. In fact, as he said, non-Whiteness (and Islam) represents instead all that is a threat to Danishness, or the flooding of non-Danish genes into Denmark. K's antagonistic and supremacist positioning of Whiteness, and of himself as self-proclaimed authority on Danishness, violently devalued non-White voices in such a context. Gender and patriarchy, as well as social norms, may also have contributed to the complexity of this positioning of individuals. As a White male with, for some, a domineering presence, his was a show of normative, and even physical, power and force.

Research indicates that younger, non-White Danes resist identifying as Danish.[70] As I have discussed elsewhere, racialized terms (such as the N-word) remain in use in Denmark as part of a persistent racialized discourse.[71] When such terms are employed, they have particular meanings. While there is no explicit use for these terms in regard to percentage of access to property ownership, or legal status, they do bear enough implicit hierarchical value and meaning to justify a positioning as not really Danish. As the example with K illustrates, this inherent racial violence continues to mark and stigmatize non-White Danes in particular ways. It resonates with historical hierarchical racist discourses and infers that Danishness is equivalent to presenting as White. Therefore, broader structures and norms, as well as increasing expressions of entitlement and genetic racism support K's position, leaving mixed Danes in a precarious position of not being able to take belonging as a given.

Slippery Rules, Slippery Sensibility

In both cases, the claim to Danishness is precarious and vulnerable for non-White individuals. Belonging and citizenship are made contingent on slippery, even ungraspable, stipulations. Affective standards such as being seen to *want* or *deserve* citizenship enough, counter-democratic requirements such as having appropriate (normative) beliefs and values, or underlying criteria such as Whiteness present significant barriers and obstacles to belonging and citizenship. Further, as the citizenship case illustrates, belonging itself is slippery and can be arbitrarily revoked. Belonging and citizenship, then, are not safe. The potential for exclusion, for example, in regard to revoking of citizenship status or the inaccessibility of Whiteness can make Danishness itself slippery for non-White persons.

When K, for example, suggested that genes indicate (non)Danishness, he took his own entitlement and right to define Danishness for granted. This self-appointed authority is sanctioned by normative frameworks that position Whiteness (and masculinity) as powered locations of truth and legitimacy.[72] Further, K's micro-aggressive questioning of non-White Danishness functions to destabilize (and make slippery) claims to Danishness by positioning non-Whiteness as essentially and inherently outside

Danishness. This happened (to me) in my home; K was a guest and an outsider. Yet during the dinner the situation took on a different character. In a not-so subtle ironic twist, K usurped my position of host, constructing me as guest (and outsider) in *his home* (country).

Irony also inflects the citizenship case. Freedom of expression is widely touted as a Danish value and fundamental right. Paradoxically, this right was (seemingly) not relevant or applicable in the citizenship case. Rather, the opposite occurred. The young man's presumed beliefs and expressions of opinion were the very grounds employed to contest his right to citizenship. Freedom of expression, thus, appears to apply to certain individuals but not to (racialized) Others. Freedom of expression is thus both slippery and a conduit for the slippery wielding of power, one that is applicable only when deemed appropriate or expedient by powered positions and normative agendas.

Legal citizenship, naturalization, residency, and other official forms of legal status, aside from being connected to identity at a more metaphorical or even psychological level, also connect to structures, rules, and bureaucracy. Because Danish institutional structures are often conceived of as fair and objective, exposing slipperiness and unreliability illuminates how such structures are skewed in favor of majoritized and powered subjects.[73] Such instability, or malleability, may undermine the sense of security in (and trustworthiness of) state and regulatory structures for those made vulnerable by such dissymmetry. Further, systemic inequality exacerbates the precariousness of minoritized positions while ensuring the power and security of majoritized positions. When belonging and citizenship are made unreliable in this way, it has consequences. Such gestures, as Anne Phoenix points out, are "not innocent, but frequently serve to perpetuate and justify the hegemony of ex-colonizers by othering as inferior those who were previously colonized and their descendants."[74]

Concluding Thoughts

Using material from news coverage of a citizenship controversy and a dinner party held in my home, this article discusses structural racial discrimination as it is expressed in public and private contexts. It finds that Danishness and Danish identity in much public and everyday discourse is slippery. That is, these notions are contingent on subjective criteria, as well as shared notions of racialized belonging. Belonging within Danishness is thus precarious and vulnerable and participation or inclusion is slippery.

I argue that this slipperiness functions to maintain power and exclude racialized persons from belonging. When majoritized Danes speak about Danishness, a form of implicit entitlement and authority is expressed in the positionings that presume entitlement to define and claim Danishness. This defining excludes, includes, and positions Danishness. Further, slipperiness allows for imprecise criteria that changes according to the whim of majoritized subjects, thereby supporting the othering of non-White bodies. Slipperiness, or unstable criteria, allows Danishness to become an avenue for performing power and exclusion, using Whiteness as an implicit or explicit guiding principle.

Both cases in the article illustrate slipperiness by way of contradictory and dissonant criteria and logics. In the dinner party, the incongruous coupling of Danishness, democracy, and Whiteness was implemented to exclude non-White Danes from nation and national identity. In the citizenship case similar connections were drawn on, in addition to affective criteria situated within individual, powered

subjectivities. Changing (slippery) expectations, rules, and definitions are thus a barrier to access. Danishness is defined by what it is not, contributing to slipperiness. This slipperiness provides control and power over Danishness.

The definitional ambiguity attributed to Danishness underscores implicit racialized discourse (and racist criteria) at the political and public level (citizenship case). Such slipperiness constructs Danishness and belonging as slippery in themselves. Even denial of discrimination and racism are slippery gestures in which majoritized positions can assert power and undermine recognition of explicit as well as implicit discrimination and racism by way of their majoritized and normative positionings. The malleable practices of defining and constructing Danishness emphasize a slippery unreliability of non-White access to Danishness. Inclusion within this (legal and social) fraternity relies on those positioned within Whiteness and thereby inherently entitled to either accept or exclude. The slipperiness imbricated within a lack of objective criteria underscores exclusion and the precariousness of inclusion, when non-White Danish (or potentially Danish) persons risk exclusion, or lack rights, despite legal status or self-identification. Slipperiness is thus a central mechanism in the negotiation of Danish identity and belonging.

Notes

[1] For more in-depth consideration of power and power to define, see Spivak, *Critique of Postcolonial Reason*; and hooks, *Outlaw Culture*.

[2] On media, see Andreassen, "Mass Media's Construction." On education, see Thingstrup, "Multikulturel lærerfaglighed som refleksionspraksis"; Horst, *På ulige fod*. On public debate, see Andreassen, "Nordic Discomfort," 42–44; Gullestad, "Normalising Racial Boundaries," 177–203; Rødje and Thorsen, "(Re)Framing Racialization," 263–81; Danbolt and Myong, "Racial Turns and Returns," 105–13; Keskinen, "Limits to Speech," 261–74. On everyday issues, see Essed and Hoving, *Dutch Racism*; Essed, *Understanding Everyday Racism*; Myong, "Adopteret."

[3] For non-Nordic sociological work, see Hill, "Structural Discrimination," 5–23; Hill, "Economic Forces," 5–23; Williams, "Racial Attitudes and Behavior," 331–52. For mental health and psychological research, see Corrigan, Markowitz, and Watson, "Structural Levels of Mental Illness Stigma," 481–91. More general texts on the topic include Pincus, "Discrimination Comes in Many Forms," 186–94; Allport, *Nature of Prejudice*. For philosophical and legal studies, see Appiah, "Stereotypes and the Shaping of Identity," 41–54.

[4] For example, see Statens offentliga utredningar *Det blågula glashuset*; *Stephen Lawrence Inquiry*.

[5] Skadegård, *Space Between*, 58; Banton, *International Action*, 50–73; Justesen, *Racisme og diskrimination*.

[6] Skadegård, *Space Between*, 80–81.

[7] On congealing, see Butler, *Gender Trouble*. On sedimenting, see Spivak, *In Other Worlds*, 118.

[8] Essed, *Understanding Everyday Racism*; Bonilla-Silva, *Racism without Racists*; Gullestad, "Blind Slaves," 177–203; Bulmer and Solomos, "Introduction: Re-thinking Ethnic and Racial Studies," 819–37; Skadegård, "Strukturel diskrimination," 160–83; Skadegård, "With Friends Like These," 214–23; Skadegård, *Space Between*.

[9] Skadegård, "With Friends Like These," 214–23; Skadegård, *Space Between*.

[10] Daniel et al., "Emerging Paradigms," 8; Johnston and Nadal, "Multiracial Microaggressions," 124.

[11] Daniel et al., "Emerging Paradigms," 7; Aspinall and Song, *Mixed Race Identities*, 3–5; Small and King-O'Riain, "Global Mixed Race," vii–xx.

[12] Small and King-O'Riain, "Global Mixed Race," vii–xx; Daniel et al., "Emerging Paradigms," 7–8.

[13] On Danish exceptionalism, see Danbolt and Myong, "Racial Turns and Returns, 42–44." See also Danbolt, "Retro Racism," 108; Blaagaard, "Remembering Nordic Colonialism," 102.

[14] Essed and Hoving, *Dutch Racism*, 9–29.

[15] See Skadegård, *Space Between*, 229; Jensen, "Danishness as Whiteness," 105–18.
[16] This is documented by, among others, Horst in *På ulige fod.*
[17] I discuss this issue in depth throughout *Space Between*, for example, 114.
[18] See Ifekwunigwe, *"Mixed Race" Studies*, pt. 3.
[19] This is broadly discussed in, for example, Skadegård, "With Friends Like These," 214–23; Skadegård, *Space Between*. See also Nadal et al., "Microaggressions and the Multiracial Experience," 36–44; Johnston and Nadal, "Multiracial Microaggressions," 123–44.
[20] This is also discussed, for example, in Daniel et al., "Emerging Paradigms," 8.
[21] On belonging, see Yuval-Davis, "Belonging and the Politics of Belonging," 197–214.
[22] Skadegård, *Space Between*, 65.
[23] Skadegård, *Space Between*, 47, 147.
[24] This erasure is discussed in more depth in, for example, Blaagaard, "Remembering Nordic Colonialism," 101–21; Rodrigues, "Danishness," 23–33.
[25] Skadegård, *Space Between*, 47.
[26] On zoos and amusement parks, see Andreassen and Henningsen, *Menneskeudstilling*. On eugenics and racial hygiene, see Dikötter, "Race Culture," 467–78; Roll-Hansen, "Geneticists and the Eugenics Movement," 335–46. On national erasure, see Blaagaard, "Remembering Nordic Colonialism," 101–21. On amnesia, see Rodrigues, "Danishness," 23–33.
[27] See Breum, *Balladen om Grønland* for more detail on this.
[28] Skadegård, "Sand Negro," 195; Rødje and Thorsen, "(Re)Framing Racialization, 263–81.
[29] See Danbolt and Myong, "Racial Turns and Returns," 39–61.
[30] Delgado and Stefancic, *Critical Race Theory*, chap. 5; Gillborn, "Education Policy," 487–88.
[31] For examples of this, see Danbolt, "Retro Racism," 105–13; Danbolt and Myong, "Racial Turns and Returns," 105–13; Andreassen, "Nordic Discomfort with Race," 42–44; Rødje and Thorsen, "(Re)Framing Racialization," 270–75.
[32] See discussions on research position by Letherby, Scott, and Williams, *Objectivity and Subjectivity in Social Research*; Alvesson, "Methodology for Close Up Studies," 167–93.
[33] Skadegård, *Space Between,* 65.
[34] See Andreassen and Myong, "Race, Gender, and Reseacher," 97–104.
[35] Alvesson, "Methodology for Close Up Studies," 171–72.
[36] Bulmer and Solomos, "Introduction: Re-thinking Ethnic and Racial Studies," 827–30. This is also discussed in hooks, *Outlaw Culture*, 3.
[37] Sue, "Microaggressions and Marginality," 3–24.
[38] Letherby, Scott, and Williams, *Objectivity and Subjectivity in Social Research*; Andreassen and Myong, "Race, Gender, and Reseacher," 97–104; Skadegård, *Space Between*, 66.
[39] Discussed in depth in Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 575–99; Stoetzler and Yuval-Davis, "Standpoint Theory," 315–33.
[40] Wren, "Cultural Racism," 142.
[41] Morten Skærbec, "Dansk statsborgerskab er helt specielt," *Politiken*, September 2, 2015, https://politiken.dk/indland/politik/art5588174/St%C3%B8jberg-Dansk-statsborgerskab-er-helt-specielt. All translations by author. Emphases added.
[42] Thomas Buhl, "Støjberg og Khader: Udanske holdninger skal ikke belønnes med statsborgerskab," *Politik DR*, October 27, 2015, https://www.dr.dk/nyheder/politik/stoejberg-og-khader-udanske-holdninger-skal-ikke-beloennes-med-statsborgerskab. Emphases added.
[43] This term is often attributed to Bateson. See Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, 244–70. Yet the concept of cognitive dissonance actually originated with Leon Festinger et. al in *When Prophecy Fails: A Social and Psychological Study of a Modern Group That Predicted the Destruction of the World* (1956) and *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (1957). Bateson used the term "double bind" in relationship to schizophrenia, which has implications that are similar to those of cognitive dissonance.
[44] See Sue, "Microaggressions and Marginality," 17.

[45] Nielsen, "Compassionate Celebritization," 1–15.
[46] It should be noted that Khader himself is racialized. While this presents some interesting potential for analysis, I do not pursue this here for the sake of focus and brevity.
[47] Skadegård, *Space Between*, 61.
[48] Skadegård, "With Friends Like These," 219–20; Skadegård, *Space Between*, 61.
[49] Essed and Hoving, *Dutch Racism*, 9–29.
[50] In Danish political discourse, as well as in official systems and statistics, the notion of "non-Western" is widely implemented.
[51] Ahmed, "Affective Economies," 117–39.
[52] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 7.
[53] Spivak, *Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, 104–5.
[54] For studies on affectivity, compassion, and citizenship, see Nielsen, "Compassionate Celebritization," 1–15; Ticktin, *Casualties of Care*.
[55] See Lundström and Teitelbaum, "Nordic Whiteness," 152–55.
[56] Rastas, "Racializing Categorization," 153; Jensen, "Danishness as Whiteness," 107–9 ; Pihl et al., "Nordic Discourses," 26.
[57] See, for example, Hervik, "Racialization in the Nordic Countries," 6.
[58] Andreassen, "Mass Media's Construction," 191–232.
[59] See Rødje and Thorsen, "(Re)Framing Racialization," 270–75; Skadegård, *Space Between*, 85; Gullestad, "Blind Slaves," 182.
[60] Skadegård, "Sand Negro," 193; Gullestad, "Normalising Racial Boundaries," 182. See also van Dijk, "Discourse and Denial of Racism," 87–118.
[61] Sue, "Microaggressions and Marginality," 5; Skadegård, "Sand Negro," 192–5; Banks, Eberhardt, and Roze, "Discrimination and Implicit Bias," 1169–89; Eckberg and Feagin, "Discrimination," 1–20.
[62] See Essed and Hoving, *Dutch Racism*; Essed, *Understanding Everyday Racism*; van Dijk, "Discourse and the Denial of Racism," 87–118; Rodrigues, "Danishness," 23–33; Bonilla-Silva, *Racism without Racists*.
[63] Myong, "Adopteret"; Sue, "Microaggressions and Marginality," 3–24.
[64] Sue, "Microaggressions and Marginality," 5.
[65] Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, 25–26.
[66] Spivak, *Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, 199.
[67] Goffman, *Stigma*.
[68] This is discussed and documented in Horst, *På ulige fod*; Fenger-Grøn and Grøndahl, *Flygtningenes*.
[69] The figures are unclear, but an educated guess based on some available statistics suggests that somewhere between 7 and 12 percent of Danes have immigrant background. In addition, in larger cities, up to 18 percent of the population may present as non-White. There is regulation against statistics that specifically address race. To assess the approximate number, I refer to statistics for people of "Non-Western Descent" which can be said to be a proxy for race. However, people of color from "Western" contexts are not included in these statistics.
[70] Gilliam, *De umulige børn*.
[71] Skadegård, *Space Between*. See also Baker, *From Savage to Negro*; Jordan, "American Chiaroscuro," 183–200; Hervik, *Racialization*; Rodje and Thorsen, "(Re)Framing Racialization," 263–81.
[72] Spivak, *Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, 199.
[73] Horst, *På ulige fod*, chaps. 3–4.
[74] Phoenix, "De-Colonising Practices," 106.

Bibliography

Ahmed, Sara. "Affective Economies." *Social Text* 22, no. 2 (Summer 2004): 117–39. https://www.uib.no/sites/w3.uib.no/files/attachments/1._ahmed-affective_economies_0.pdf.

Allport, Gordon W. *The Nature of Prejudice.* Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor, 1958.

Alvesson, Mats. "Methodology for Close Up Studies: Struggling with Closeness and Closure." *Higher Education* (Springer 2003): 167–93. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1024716513774.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities.* Rev. ed. London: Verso, 2006.

Andreassen, Rikke. "The Mass Media's Construction of Gender, Race, Sexuality and Nationality: An Analysis of the Danish News Media's Communication about Visible Minorities." PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2006.

——— "The Nordic Discomfort with Race (Debate with Annika Rabo)." *Nordic Journal of Migration Research* 4, no. 1 (March 2014): 42–44. https://www.academia.edu/6788039/.

Andreassen, Rikke and Anne Folke Henningsen. *Menneskeudstilling: Fremvisninger af eksotiske mennesker i zoologisk have og Tivoli.* Copenhagen: Tiderne Skifter, 2011.

Andreassen, Rikke and Lene Myong. "Race, Gender, and Researcher Positionality Analysed through Memory Work." *Nordic Journal of Migration Research* 7, no. 2 (2017): 97–104. http://doi.org/10.1515/njmr-2017-0011.

Appiah, Anthony. "Stereotypes and the Shaping of Identity." *California Law Review* 88, no. 1 (2000): 41–54. https://doi.org/10.2307/3481272.

Aspinall, Peter and Miri Song, eds. *Mixed Race Identities.* London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013.

Baker, Lee D. *From Savage to Negro: Anthropology and the Construction of Race, 1896–1954.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

Banks, R. Richard, Jennifer L. Eberhardt and Lee Ross. "Discrimination and Implicit Bias in a Racially Unequal Society." *California Law Review* 94, no. 4 (2006): 1169–89. https://doi.org/10.2307/20439061.

Banton, Michael. *International Action against Racial Discrimination.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.

Bateson, Gregory. *Steps to an Ecology of Mind.* San Francisco: Chandler Publishing, 1972.

Bateson, Gregory, Don D. Jackson, Jay Haley, and John H. Weakland. "A Note on the Double Bind—1962." *Family Process* 2, no. 1 (March 1963): 154–61. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1545-5300.1963.00154.x.

Blaagaard, Bolette. "Remembering Nordic Colonialism: Danish Cultural Memory in Journalistic Practice." *KULT* 7 (2010): 101–21. https://www.academia.edu/27986092/Remembering_Nordic_Colonialism.

Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. *Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and Racial Inequality in Contemporary America.* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010.

Breum, Martin, ed. *Balladen om Grønland.* Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 2014.

Bulmer, Martin and John Solomos. "Introduction: Re-thinking Ethnic and Racial Studies." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 21, no. 5 (1998): 819–37. https://doi.org/10.1080/014198798329667.

Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble.* New York: Routledge, 1990.

Corrigan, Patrick W., Fred E. Markowitz, and Amy C. Watson. "Structural Levels of Mental Illness Stigma and Discrimination." *Schizophrenia Bulletin* 30, no. 3 (2004): 481–91. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.schbul.a007096.

Danbolt, Mathias. "Retro Racism: Colonial Ignorance and Racialized Affective Consumption in Danish Public Culture." *Nordic Journal of Migration Research* 7, no. 2 (2017): 105–13. https://doi.org/10.1515/njmr-2017-0013.

Danbolt, Mathias and Lene Myong. "Racial Turns and Returns: Recalibrations of Racial Exceptionalism in Danish Public Debates on Racism." In *Racialization, Racism, and Anti-Racism in the Nordic Countries*, edited by Peter Hervik, 39–61. New York: Palgrave, 2019. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-74630-2_2.

Danbolt, Mathias and Tobias Raun. "Hornsleths un/fair trade: Æstetisk evangelisme og nykolonialistisk etnografi i samtidskunsten." *Kvinder, køn og forskning* (2008): 23–37. https://doi.org/10.7146/kkf.v0i4.27943.

Daniel, Reginald G., Laura Kina, Wei Ming Dariotis, and Camilla Fojas. "Emerging Paradigms in Critical Mixed Races Studies." *Journal of Critical Mixed Race Studies* 1, no. 1 (2014): 7–62. https://doi.org/10.5070/C811013868.

Delgado, Richard and Jean Stefancic. *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction.* New York: New York University Press, 2001.

Dikötter, Frank. "Race Culture: Recent Perspectives on the History of Eugenics." *American Historical Review* 103, no. 2 (1998): 467–78. https://doi.org/10.2307/2649776.

Eckberg, Douglas L. and Joe R. Feagin. "Discrimination: Motivation, Action, Effects, and Context." *Annual Review of Sociology* 6 (1980): 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.06.080180.000245.

Essed, Philomena. *Understanding Everyday Racism: An Interdisciplinary Theory.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1991.

Essed, Philomena and Isabel Hoving. *Dutch Racism.* Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2014.

Fenger-Grøn, Carsten and Malene Grøndahl. *Flygtningenes Danmarkshistorie 1954–2004.* Aarhus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 2004.

Festinger, Leon, Henry W. Reicken, and Stanley Schachter. *Prophecy Fails: A Social and Psychological Study of a Modern Group That Predicted the Destruction of the World*. New York: Harper-Torchbooks, 1956.

Festinger, Leon. *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance.* Stanford University Press 1957.

Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality.* New York: Vintage, 1980.

Gillborn, David. "Education Policy as an Act of White Supremacy: Whiteness, Critical Race Theory and Educational Reform." *Journal of Education Policy* 20, no. 4 (2005): 485–505. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680930500132346.

Gilliam, Laura. *De umulige børn og det ordentlige menneske: Identitet, ballade og muslimske fællesskaber blandt etniske minoritetsbørn*. Aarhus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag: 2009.

Goffman, Erwin. *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 2009.

Gullestad, Marianne. "Blind Slaves of Our Prejudices: Debating 'Culture' and 'Race' in Norway." *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology* 69, no. 2 (2004): 177–203. https://doi.org/10.1080/0014184042000212858.

———. "Normalising Racial Boundaries: The Norwegian Dispute about the Term *Neger*." *Social Anthropology* 13, no. 1 (2005): 27–46. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8676.2005.tb00118.x.

Hall, Stuart. *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices.* London: Sage, 1997.

Haraway, Donna. "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (1988): 575–99. https://doi.org/10.2307/3178066.

Hervik, Peter. "Racialization in the Nordic Countries: An Introduction." In *Racialization, Racism, and Anti-Racism in the Nordic Countries*, edited by Peter Hervik, 3–38. New York: Palgrave, 2019.

———. ed. *Racialization, Racism, and Anti-Racism in the Nordic Countries.* New York: Palgrave, 2019. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-74630-2.

Hickman, Christine B. "The Devil and the One Drop Rule: Racial Categories, African Americans, and the U.S. Census." *Michigan Law Review* 95, no. 5 (March 1997): 1161–1265. https://doi.org/10.2307/1290008.

Hill, Robert B. "Economic Forces, Structural Discrimination and Black Family Instability." *Review of Black Political Economy* 17, no. 3 (Winter 1989): 5–23. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02901099.

———. "Structural Discrimination: The Unintended Consequences of Institutional Processes." In *Surveying Social Life*, edited by Hubert J. O'Gorman, 353–75. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1988.

hooks, bell. *Outlaw Culture: Resisting Representations.* New York: Routledge, 1994.

Horst, Christian. *På ulige fod: Etniske minoritetsbørn som et skoleeksempel.* Aarhus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 2017.

Ifekwunigwe, Jayne O., ed. "*Mixed Race" Studies: A Reader*. London: Routledge, 2004.

Jensen, Lars. "Danishness as Whiteness in Crisis: Emerging Post-Imperial and Development Aid Anxieties." In *Whiteness and Postcolonialism in the Nordic Region: Exceptionalism, Migrant Others and National Identities*, edited by Kristín Loftsdóttir and Lars Jensen, 105–18. New York: Routledge, 2012.

Johnston, Marc P. and Kevin Nadal. "Multiracial Microaggressions: Exposing Monoracism in Everyday Life and Clinical Practice." In *Microaggressions and Marginality: Manifestation, Dynamics and Impact*, edited by Derald Wing Sue, 123–44. New York: Wiley & Sons, 2010.

Jordan, Winthrop D. "American Chiaroscuro: The Status and Definition of Mulattoes in the British Colonies." *William and Mary Quarterly* 19, no. 2 (April 1962): 183–200. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1921922.

Justesen, Pia. *Racisme og diskrimination: Danmark og menneskerettighederne.* Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 2003.

Keskinen, Suvi. "Limits to Speech? The Racialised Politics of Gendered Violence in Denmark and Finland." *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 33, no. 3 (June 2012): 261–74. https://doi.org/10.1080/07256868.2012.673470.

King-O'Riain, Rebecca C. and Stephen Small. "Global Mixed Race: An Introduction." In *Global Mixed Race*, edited by Rebecca C. King-O'Riain, Stephen Small, Minelle Mahtani, Miri Song, and Paul Spickard, vii–xxii. New York: New York University Press, 2014.

Letherby, Gayle, John Scott, and Malcolm Williams. *Objectivity and Subjectivity in Social Research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2013.

Lippert-Rasmussen, Kasper. "The Badness of Discrimination." *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 9 (2006): 167–85. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10677-006-9014-x.

Lundström, Catrin and Benjamin R. Teitelbaum. "Nordic Whiteness: An Introduction." *Scandinavian Studies* 89, no. 2 (2017): 151–58.

Myong, Lene. "Adopteret: Fortællinger om transnational og racialiseret tilblivelse." PhD diss., Århus Universitet, 2009.

Nadal, Kevin L., Yinglee Wong, Katie Griffin, Julie Sriken, Vivian Vargas, Michelle Wideman, and Ajayi Kolawole. "Microaggressions and the Multiracial Experience." Special issue on Behavioral and Social Science, *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 1, no. 7 (June 2011): 36–44. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Kevin-Nadal/publication/229051893_Microaggressions_and_the_Multiracial_Experience/links/0a85e537a05f0dcf25000000/Microaggressions-and-the-Multiracial-Experience.pdf.

Nielsen, Asta Smedegard. "Compassionate Celebritization: Unpacking the 'True Feelings' of the Danish People in the Media Reporting on a Deportation Case." *Feminist Media Studies* (2020): 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2020.1826995.

Phoenix, Anne. "De-Colonising Practices: Negotiating Narratives from Racialised and Gendered Experiences of Education." *Race Ethnicity and Education* 12, no. 1 (March 2009): 101–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/13613320802651053.

Pihl, Joron, Gunilla Holm, Anna-Leena Riitaoja, Jón Ingvar Kjaran, and Marie Carlson. "Nordic Discourses on Marginalisation through Education." *Education Inquiry* 9, no. 1 (2018): 22–39. https://doi.org/10.1080/20004508.2018.1428032.

Pincus, Fred L. "Discrimination Comes in Many Forms: Individual, Institutional, and Structural." *American Behavioral Scientist* 40, no. 2 (November/December 1996): 186–94. https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764296040002009.

Rastas, Anna. "Racializing Categorization among Young People in Finland." *Young* 13, no. 2 (2005): 147–66. https://doi.org/10.1177/1103308805051319.

Rødje, Kjetil and Tess Sophie Skadegård Thorsen. "(Re)Framing Racialization: Djurs Sommerland as a Battleground of (Anti-)Racism." In *Racialization, Racism, and Anti-Racism in the Nordic Countries*, edited by Peter Hervik, 263–81. New York: Palgrave, 2019.

Rodrigues, Lia Paula. "Danishness, Nordic Amnesia and Immigrant Museums." *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 9, no. 4 (2011): 23–33. https://www.okcir.com/product/journal-article-danishness-nordic-amnesia-and-immigrant-museums-by-lia-paula-rodrigues.

Roll-Hansen, Niels. "Geneticists and the Eugenics Movement in Scandinavia." *British Journal for the History of Science* (1989): 335–46. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007087400026194.

Roth, Wendy D. "The End of the One-Drop Rule? Labeling of Multiracial Children in Black Intermarriages." *Sociological Forum* 20, no. 1 (March 2005): 35–67. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11206-005-1897-0.

Skadegård, Mira C. "Sand Negro." *Social eksklusion, læring og forandring*, edited by Annette Bilfeldt, Iben Jensen, and John Andersen, 168–82. Aalborg: Aalborg Universitetsforlag, 2016.

———. *The Space Between: A Study of Structural Discrimination in Danish Contexts.* Aalborg: Aalborg Universitetsforlag, 2018.

———. "Strukturel diskrimination i hverdagen." In *Rettigheder, empowerment og læring*, edited by Annette Bilfeldt, Iben Jensen, and John Andersen, 160–83. Aalborg: Aalborg Universitetsforlag, 2014.

———. "With Friends Like These, Who Needs Enemies." *Nordic Journal of Migration Research* 7, no. 4 (December 2017): 214–23. http://doi.org/10.1515/njmr-2017-0033.

Statens offentliga utredningar (SOU), *Det blågula glashuset: Strukturell diskriminering i Sverige*, no. 56 (Stockholm: SOU, 2005). https://www.regeringen.se/rattsliga-dokument/statens-offentliga-utredningar/2005/06/sou-200556/.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999.

———. *In Other Worlds, Essays in Cultural Politics*. London: Routledge, 1988.

The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry: Report of an Inquiry by Sir William Macpherson of Cluny. London: Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Command of Her Majesty, February 1999. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/277111/4262.pdf.

Stoetzler, Marcel and Nira Yuval-Davis. "Standpoint Theory, Situated Knowledge and the Situated Imagination." *Feminist Theory* 3, no. 3 (December 2002): 315–33. https://doi.org/10.1177/146470002762492024.