Application for PhD scholarship at the Department of Political Science
University of Copenhagen

Deadline
The form must be received by the PhD secretariat no later than the date in the call (Danish time)

Further information
Further information may be found at http://samf.ku.dk/phd-skolen/english

Applicants are also urged to contact the secretariat if they have questions about the application process. Questions may be directed to:

- Ditte Wachs, dih@samf.ku.dk
- Bigitte Boas Hein: bibh@samf.ku.dk or

Requirements
This form must be filled out and correspond to the required project description in the call. It should be in English using 12-point Times New Roman font, with single line spacing. Please pay attention to the space limits specified below. Figures may be included. One figure counts for 750 characters. You should upload this form as the “project description” when you apply for the position as PhD student.

1. Name of the applicant
Dean Cooper-Cunningham

2. Are you applying for the 5+3 or the 4+4 PhD study program?
5+3  4+4

3. Supervisor / suggested supervisor
Lene Hansen
4. A short summary of the proposed research project (maximum: 1,200 characters incl. spaces)

This project looks at how LGBT bodies have been securitized as dangers to society and politics because of their ‘difference’. Specifically, it looks at global\(^1\) LGBT movements using Russia and the USA as its primary case studies. I will use analysis of visuals (including posters, comic books, photographs, artworks, etc.) as a methodology to examine the role of (international) popular culture and images in this construction of difference-as-danger. The project will cover traditional methods of speaking (discourse) as well as actions like protesting (practice), and visuals. This is a new approach in both International Relations and visual politics studies. Ultimately, the PhD project is about understanding how certain bodies are made ‘different’ and dangerous across cultures, societies, and time.

5. Purpose of the research project (maximum: 1,200 characters incl. spaces).

- What is the general purpose of the project?
- What kind of new insights and results may the project produce?

How have the sexuality and gender of LGBT movements been constructed in Russia and the USA? To what extent have LGBT individuals and groups been securitized? What were the securitizations of sexuality and gender that the LGBT movement was formed against in Russia and the USA? What are the (international) politics that LGBT movements in have emerged out of and what have been the counter-securitizing strategies of LGBT groups? What has been the role of visuals and popular culture (including posters, comic books, photographs), alongside discourse and practice (e.g. Pussy Riots), in resistance to and the construction of dangerous ‘difference’? How are images used as counter-narratives?

In covering a movement that is socio-politically, culturally, geographically, and temporally diverse, I explore the ways in which the LGBT movement has acquired an international perspective. Both in terms of operating as an international framework for action and in achieving an international political profile that crosses borders and influences intra-state organizations like the United Nations. Focusing on the international unpacks the international politics that social movements emerge from and evolve around.

\(^1\) In terms of groups crossing boundaries and borders to form coalitions, ‘borderless’ international groups with national sub-sections, and fights by disparate groups seeking similar ends.
6. Background (maximum: 6,000 characters incl. spaces).

- Describe the background of the research project.
- Give a summary of the research already published relating to the proposed research project.

The impetus for this project came from my second reading of Beyond Mothers, Monsters, Whores (Gentry and Sjoberg 2015) where I found that I was reading what looked like an implicit account of the securitization of non-traditional, ‘different’, gender performances that engage with politics. Of particular import is also Hansen’s (2000) Little Mermaid article, which reconfigures how security can be spoken. Looking at alternative ways of ‘speaking’ and how the (suffering) body (often self-inflicted) is represented visually is something largely unacknowledged in current security scholarship. It was from these works, and Fierke’s work on the body (2013), that I focused my undergraduate dissertation on the securitization of gender difference. I engaged extensively with gender, security, and the politics of visual culture, focusing my dissertation specifically on visual representations of pro- and anti-suffrage movements in Britain (1907-1914). I brought the previously disparate Queer, security, and visual culture literatures into conversation, examining how the suffragettes were constructed as ‘different’ and threatening to British societal norms.

There is a lot of feminist literature. A lot of this literature, especially in IR, is tells the same recurrent story: that we need to pay attention to gender. With all this literature and supposedly increasing equality, how are so-called ‘different’ (the non-Western, non-White, non-Christian, non-cisgendered, non-male, non-heterosexual) individuals still constructed as dangerous to political and societal order (Weber 2016)? There is a tension between how ‘different’ bodies are perceived and dealt with in society, especially when they seek a stake in dominant political structures: on one hand they are cast as dangerous to political stability, but also, in the case of women, necessary for producing the nation through childbirth (Sjoberg 2014). And in the case of homosexuals, necessary for legitimating interventionist foreign policies: such as the Obama Administration’s ‘Gay Rights as Human Rights’ policies (Weber 2016). This brings into the fold how ‘different’ bodies, especially LGBT bodies which go well beyond the pale, are not fully autonomous bodies: they are controlled/managed by law and hegemonic hetero- and homo-normative structures. Controlled to the extent that they, as decadent or degenerate subjects, are marked for necropolitical management through containment and/or violence (Weber 2016). ‘Different’ individuals, it appears, are not quite human, not fully materialised as political subjects (Fierke 2015, 86).

Dealing with ‘different’ bodies has been historically problematic with regards their place in politics and society. How are they (visually) dehumanized? Bodies that transgress ‘normal’ gender performances are marginalised in politics, and when they engage politically there seems to be something dangerous about them. LGBT people are marginalised in politics, insecure when ‘speaking’ security, and just for ‘being’. One only needs to look at the recent ‘Grindr Killer’, Stephen Port who killed multiple self-identified homosexual men simply for existing. This project looks at how such bodies have been securitized as dangers to society and politics, more or less universally, taking a predominantly visual focus.

It is on this last point that I bring in Lene Hansen’s work on security as practice and visual securitization, adding insights from Karin Fierke’s work on political self-sacrifice to add theoretical richness to the understanding of ‘dangerous’ bodies. Specifically using Fierke’s work to ask: How
is the body being used as a canvas to visually speak and resist? While Hansen and her colleagues in the Images and International Security project have broached methodology (Hansen 2011; 2014; Williams 2003), traditional IR questions like war (Hansen 2016), and topics such as terrorism (Friis 2015), and those in the Visual Politics field at Queensland have extensively theorized methodology (Bleiker 2015; 2017; Bleiker and Butler 2016), and images and humanitarian crises (Hutchison, Bleiker, and Campbell 2014) there is no prominent literature focusing on social movements like the global LGBT movement and security as practice, discourse and visual. Nor are there prominent studies that use Bleiker’s (2016) call to use multiple and overlapping methods, which this project will do.

What is particularly striking in the cases examined here is that marginalised bodies are choosing to ‘speak’ in ways that often look like counter-securitizations in a non-traditional form. This has meant that dominant securitization theory has, to date, been unable to deal with such utterances within a securitization framework. This project explores this puzzle by looking at how the non-discursive (practice, and visuals) is implicated in resistance to categorisation as ‘different’, how antinormative bodies are constructed as such, and how marginalised individuals/collectives ‘speak’. I ask whether these counter-responses (in discourse, practice, and visual form) accept difference or reject difference to resist. Looking back to the polis, at forms of Othering, and using the LGBTQ movement in Russia and the USA as empirical case studies, I try to grasp what is going on. Who is getting to speak security? How is security being spoken? And why is security being spoken this way? By extension, what does ‘security’ itself actually look like and mean to certain actors? How is danger being constructed?

A move out of the current security dialogue may well provide better space for dealing with alternative acts of speech and creates a political space for individuals and groups who are threatened by security elites to speak their security. In many ways this project is normative in making a shift towards a security as ethics (Nyman and Burke 2016). The unique moves this project makes are in bridging security as practice, visual securitization, ‘traditional’ securitization literature, post-structuralism, and feminist and gender literatures to assess social movements.
7. **Project description** (maximum: 16,000 characters incl. spaces).

- Give a detailed description of your research project, i.e. an account of the research questions that you will pursue and what theory and methodology that you will adopt.
- What kind of new insights and results may the project produce? What does your project add to the already accumulated knowledge?
- Are there any ethical considerations in relation to the methods used in the project? How will you address these considerations?
- Are there any limitations of the project?

**Research Context**

The cases selected for this analysis (US and Russian LGBT movements) are geographically and temporally diverse, covering different domestic political systems. They have different histories, cultures, and laws towards controlling/punishing ‘different’ and ‘dangerous’ bodies. This provides conceptual space to examine and compare how in particular gendered and deviant bodies have been portrayed, unpacking similarities and differences across spaces, places, and times. It also leaves room to question how movements evolve over time and how strategies of resistance/counter-securitization also evolve with these movements. The analysis will also lead into questions of the ways in which these movements have acquired an international status and become frameworks for action. This will allow me to determine the role of visual culture in mobilising ‘difference’ for the persecution of or resistance by these ‘different’ bodies, internationally and/or society-specifically. This is about unpacking how bodies are made different and dangerous.

The equal rights of and questions about violence against the LGBT community have been developing and growing in potency over the past century. A better understanding of why LGBTs are securitized as ‘dangerous’ as political subjects who speak has only become more crucial against the backdrop of an increasingly permissive environment where the incidence of attacks on not only LGBTs and women but immigrants and people of colour has increased dramatically, along with the greater acceptance of racist, homophobic and gendered language. Gaining a better understanding of how images contribute to the securitization of the ‘dangerous’ individuals who dare not only to resist, but even to speak politically is extremely important for beginning to reverse these trends. My research will contribute to that understanding.

Problematising dominant linguistic-epistemological biases in IR scholarship, I seek to understand how certain ‘different’ individuals/collectives make their arguments heard. However, this means examining both traditional and alternative methods of ‘speaking’ to determine their role in resistance/support of equality movements: I assess how discourse(s) (words/text), practice (demonstrations, attacks), and visuals (posters, comics) interact/intersect. This is a new approach in IR scholarship.

Specifically, I will examine: #HomoPromo (Sochi); editorial photographs of US Gay Marriage bill and Russian ‘gay-bashing’; visual social media campaigns like #LoveWins; and comic books like Batman, Voodoo, and X-Men. I will trace representations of wider political events not explicitly featured but referenced.
The international relations of this securitization goes beyond solely anti-LGBT politics. Anti-immigration policies can be traced back to figurations of ‘the homosexual’ as a degenerate, decadent figure (Weber 2016). Such figurations and securitizations of foreign difference-as-danger are embedded and interwoven in immigration policies, whereby the immigrant is a developmentally (temporally) backwards individual who is homosexual because of their developmental backwardness and must be contained within their homeland (geographical) or punished for breaching boundaries of homonormativity and national borders. Cynthia Weber (2016) shows how ‘homosexuality’ is embedded in figures like the ‘immigrant’ and the ‘terrorist’ both temporally and spatially: Western understandings of sexuality (particularly Freud’s developmental tropes) view homosexuality as a developmental stage through which all ‘developed’ individuals and states must go through before rationally realizing that heterosexuality is the correct way to exist and produce the nation. Immigrant and terrorist figures are locked into this homosexuality because they are either not quite fully developed or are undevelopable: they cannot be made to fit into the Western mold. These types of narratives and embedded knowledge, reified through statecraft-as-mancraft, underpin the securitized responses to LGBT bodies in Russia and the USA. People are being securitized, deported, imprisoned, tortured, and, I argue, terrorized for anti-normative LGBT identity performances. This is a lived reality that must be understood in order to reverse and/or escape such modes of thinking and action.

These ‘different’, ‘dangerous’ bodies, it appears, are not quite ‘human’ (which is itself a very problematic category as a neoliberal, neocolonial, enlightenment project [Bakshi, Jivraj, and Posocco 2016]) or fully materialised as political subjects. Both movements follow a similar historical trajectory but with varying success arising from their resistance. As gender is broader than the Woman Question, it important to look at how it is performed on multiple bodies, both individual and collective (Rao 2014). This analysis looks at the destabilisation of what acceptable(traditional) political bodies, the straight white Western male, looks like.

**Methodology**

Methodologically, I depart from Hansen (2011), and Heck and Schlag’s (2012) visual methodologies in so far as I deploy both methods in the same analysis. Also, unlike either of them, I examine competing (visual) cross-cultural representations and/or competing (visual) counter-narratives. Given that selection criteria for images is methodologically challenging and their analysis is so complex, the use of multiple, competing methodologies will be explored as a way of more fully analysing and better understanding what the images portray and say (Bleiker 2015). Also, how they impact on the construction of security. An analysis that covers discourse, practice, and visuals is a new approach in IR: this project will theorise how to address such a puzzle. An overarching securitization lens will shape this analysis, though I will specifically look at securitizations and counter-securitizations (Stritzel and Chang 2015).

Using the global LGBT movement (in Russia and the USA) as a case study, the Ph.D. will trace evolving constructions of ‘different’ bodies. It looks at how and if these movements become international in scope identifying cross-movement similarities and differences. The project covers the period from the Twentieth Century to the present because the LGBT struggle for legal and political equality, and resistance against this, emerged most markedly following the 1969 Stonewall Riots. It gained further political traction with the discovery of AIDSGRID and its malicious
association with the LGBT community (1980s), and worldwide struggles for/resistance against same-sex marriage (post-1990s). Recently the LGBT movement has seen a recent resurgence: from the attention on Russia’s LGBT policies around the time of the Sochi Olympic Games to the US legalising LGBT marriage, and the very recent Trans* marches and wider anti-LGBT sentiment in the USA following Trump’s election.

**Significance of the Research and Opportunities for Innovation**

There has been increased attention towards (anti-/LGBT movements in Russia and USA in recent years, following Donald Trump’s election and President Putin’s anti-homosexual propaganda laws. This provides a platform from which to engage a variety of individuals and other researchers in my innovative and interdisciplinary project.

This means the project has a significant potential for wider societal impact. While there are other projects, such as the Dangerous Women in Edinburgh that focus on related questions, my project is original in bringing together the problem of ‘dangerous’ others with their visual securitization and questions of political self-sacrifice and emotions. In doing so my theorization builds on three significant literatures on queer theory, securitization and political self-sacrifice.

This research will have impact on the Visual Politics Project (Queensland) and the Images and International Security Project (Copenhagen), neither of which currently study gender, security, and images together. More widely, it will encourage deeper analyses that go beyond written/spoken discourse, encouraging attention to the body and visuals as crucial for International Security and IR as a field, as well as all scholarship on society, the international, and politics and governance.

Research of this nature has become even more necessary in a time where attacks on women, LGBT individuals, as well as racially motivated violence, have become ever more prevalent and acceptable. A better understanding of how images are implicated in the securitization of ‘different’, ‘dangerous’ bodies who resist, and sometimes only express political opinion(s), is fundamental to reversing such trends.

Social media will play a key part in this project given the visual nature of this project. I will also engage Benjamin Dix’s PositiveNegatives project for a special edition comic strip or cartoon on my research, with potential for a summarising comic strip at the end to raise awareness of the need for greater respect for LGBT, women’s, and people of colour’s claims to the political.
8. Preliminary study plan and organization (maximum: 2,400 characters incl. spaces).

- Provide a short outline of your study plan stating the activities in the project for every semester (6 months period), i.e. thesis work, studies at other educational institutions (preferably abroad), participation in courses etc.
- How does the project relate to the research at the Department of Political Science, UCPH? Describe the researchers and research group(s) at the Department of Political Science, UCPH that you plan to collaborate with during the PhD study.
- Do you plan to collaborate with researchers at other departments?
- Are you planning to apply for external funding and if so from which sources?
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date / Period</th>
<th>Description of research activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>Duration of Ph.D.</td>
<td>Russian Language Training to allow better analysis/understanding of the Russian images included as primary sources in this project. For cultural awareness and access to Russian-specific social media sites (e.g. VK.com)</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2017 – 2018</td>
<td>MA studies for 4+4 programme.</td>
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| March – August 2019   | Draft Chapter on Theoretical Approach.  
  - Liaise with supervisor(s) and the Images and International Security project.  
  - Liaise with Queensland’s Visual Politics departments on theoretical model.  
  Review social movements literature.                                                                 |
| September 2019 – February 2020 | Research Visits to gather and examine primary visual sources (e.g. newspaper articles, magazines, demonstration banners) held in their archives: Schwules Museum, Germany (LGBT History museum), GLBT Museum, San Francisco (One of the world’s largest LGBT history collections, particularly documenting the lived reality of LGBT activists), and Leslie-Lohman Museum/Library, New York (collection of visuals created by LGBT activists and artists).  
  Select and begin analysis of images to be used in USA empirical case.  
  Identify common themes that give the LGBT movement an international perspective. Links to Russia? |
| March – August 2020   | Prepare paper for Pan-European Conference on IR. Draft Chapters on politically active LGBTs in the USA.                                                                                                                           |
| September 2020 – February 2021 | Research on Russian LGBT movement. Emphasis on social media (incl. Russia-only media), worldwide responses to LGBT rights in Russia, (global) marches in support of Russian LGBTs, posters, and YouTube videos of anti-LGBT violence.  
  Analyse images used by and against LGBT movement for equality, and images constructing difference-as-danger. Identify commonalities/disparities with the USA movements.  
  Draft Chapters on: The use of images in support of LGBT movement in USA and Russia (1960s-Present) and the use of images to deter/delegitimise LGBT movement in USA and Russia (1960s-Present). |
| March – September 2021 | Revisit literature for all chapters, update to include new/revised studies.                                                                                                                                                                               |
Redraft all chapters, making sure research themes and questions are coherent in each.

Introduction and conclusion. Thesis final draft.
9. **Estimated budget** (in DKK or EUR).

- Provide a summary budget of any major expenses incurred in connection with field work, experimental studies, travel expenses, studies abroad, conferences, equipment etc.
- You should NOT include living expenses or expenditure on accommodation, food, office equipment and/or books.

**EISA Conference (per annum)**
- €200 accommodation
- €100 flights
- €200 attendance

**Research in USA**
- €1200 flights
- €1500-€1800 per month living costs

**Potential visiting research post at Queensland**
- €1200 flights
- €1500-€1800 per month living costs

**Commissioning of Comic Book to make research accessible**
Between €500-1000 (quote from DC Thomson, Scotland).
10. References/literature (maximum: 2,400 characters incl. spaces).


