A BOUNDARY OF WHITE INCLUSION:
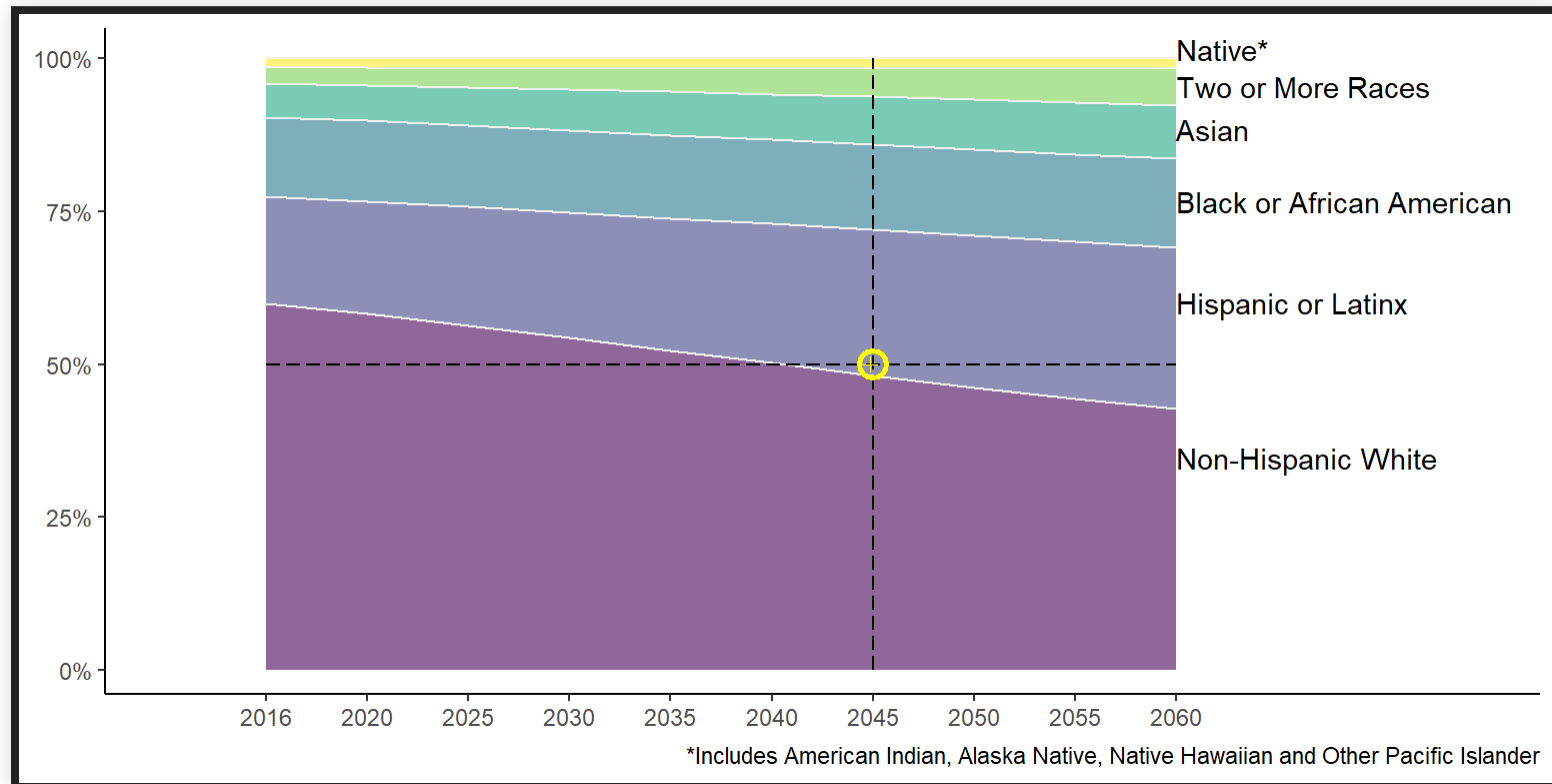
THE ROLE OF RELIGION AND COUNTRY OF ORIGIN ON ETHNORACIAL ASSIGNMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

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CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS IN THE U.S.

CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS, CHANGING LABELS?

- The political consequences demographic changes are well-studied (see Abrajano and Hajnal 2015, Craig and Richeson 2014).

- Demographic shifts often mean more people choose different/multiracial categories (see Davenport 2018).

- But what about groups left without a bureaucratically recognized label?

- Leads to new questions on identity...

NEW QUESTIONS ON IDENTITY

- Do changing demographics and identity options alter the groups people identify with?

- Do these changes alter the connections between identity and political attitudes?

- How do people perceive others with unclear identities and with what consequences?

- Do government classification schemes influence those perceptions?

NEW QUESTIONS ON IDENTITY

- Do changing demographics and identity options alter the groups people identify with?

- Do the changes alter the connections between identity and political attitudes?

- How do people perceive others with unclear identities and with what consequences?

- Do government classification schemes influence those perceptions?

TALK TAKE-AWAY

- How people assign ethnoracial labels to others with unclear identities is based on both country of origin *and religion*.

- Moreover, both country of origin and religion influence how people perceive those with unclear identities' skin pigmentation.

- Government classification schemes do not influence how people assign ethnoracial labels.

TALK OUTLINE

1. Introduction
    A. On Whiteness
    B. Analytical Approach
    C. On MENA
2. Theory
    A. Evolution of Religion and Race
    B. Historical Classification of MENA
3. Empirical Study
    A. Hypotheses
    B. Design and Data
    C. Results
    D. Discussion
4. Concluding Remarks

ON WHITENESS

- Who is considered a White in America? It is not necessarily problematized.

- Is it just a matter of country of origin (i.e. European origins)?

- Might religion influence how people assign racial categories to others (i.e. White Anglo-Saxon Protestants aka WASPs)?

- Religion is a unique attribute, not synonymous with country of origin, and it can alter ethnoracial assignment.

WHAT DOES 'ETHNORACIAL' MEAN?

- Race *commonly* refers to differences in phenotype or physical features; harder boundaries between races.

- Ethnicity *commonly* refers to cultural differences; softer boundaries between ethnicities.

- Some scholars use ethnicity to convey social classification system with unequal power dynamics—including race.

- I use the term "ethnoracial" to capture the ambiguities between race and ethnicity, not to hide it.

THREE DIMENSIONS OF ETHNORACIAL IDENTITY

Psychological: Ethnoracial Identification

Social: Ethnoracial Assignment

Political (viz state institutions): Ethnoracial Classification

PSYCHOLOGICAL: ETHNORACIAL IDENTIFICATION

- How individuals, as members of their community, understand their own ethnoracial identity.

- It does not mean others will pick the same ethnoracial category or categories for that person.

- It does not mean the categories even exist on paper.

SOCIAL: ETHNORACIAL ASSIGNMENT

- "The ways in which the dominant culture and popular understandings construct different categories of social and political beings" (Brodkin 1994, pp 21).

- Relates to how a 'person on the street' would label others' ethnoracial identity.

POLITICAL: ETHNORACIAL CLASSIFICATION

- Political institutions have the power to create, remove, and codify ethnoracial labels.

- Most forms use categories defined by the state.

EXAMPLES

Ethnoracial Group	Ethnoracial Identification	Ethnoracial Assignment	Ethnoracial Classification
(Monoracial) Black	✓	✓	✓
South Asian (Lee & Ramakrishnan 2019)	✓	✗	✓
Middle Eastern & North African	✓	✓	✗

EXAMPLES

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(Monoracial) Black	✓	✓	✓
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EXAMPLES

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This talk focuses on the tensions between inconsistent ethnoracial classification and ethnoracial assignment using the case of MENA identity in the United States.

WHY MENA IS A USEFUL CASE STUDY

- MENA individuals were classified as White in the US as early as 1909 (Lopez 1997).

- **But** White may not be most appropriate, especially considering post-9/11.

- They are subjected to restrictive travel policies.

# WHY MENA IS A USEFUL CASE STUDY

- MENA individuals are dehumanized (Ktiely et al. 2015).

- They are victims of non-specific hate crimes (www.hrw.org).

- Moreover, the racialization of Muslims (e.g. Lajevardi 2020, Oskooii et al., 2019) complicates racialization of MENA.

- But still MENA are classified as White, and often included in research on White identity.

WHO COUNTS AS MENA (AND CAVEATS)

- MENA individuals come or have ancestry from North Africa, the Levant, the Gulf, including Iran, Israel/Palestine, and Turkey.

- Southwest Asian and North African (SWANA) is increasingly used; for now, discipline still uses MENA.

WHO COUNTS AS MENA (AND CAVEATS)

- MENA are ethnically diverse: many non-Arab ethnicities in Arab-majority countries (e.g., Kurds, Azari, Amazigh, etc...).

- MENA are religiously diverse: Not all MENA individuals are Muslims, and not all Muslims are MENA (most Muslims are Asian).

- MENA are racially diverse: Not all MENA are 'White'. There are many Afro-MENA individuals despite government classification.
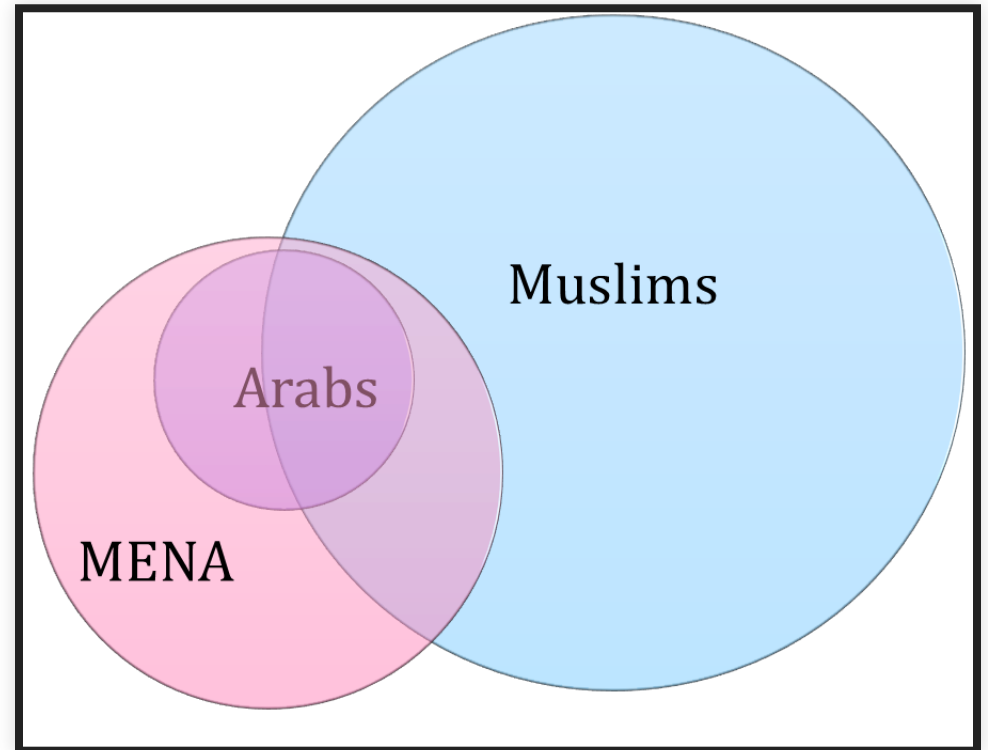
THEORY

THE EVOLUTION OF RELIGION AND RACE

- Religion was an early basis around which societies differentiated people.

- One of the first definitions of race in Sebastian de Covarrubias' 16th-century dictionary defined race as synonymous with 'blood' and 'religion'.

- Religion was seen as an immutable characteristic which manifested into physical attributes.

  - Jews and Muslims were considered "black" and diseased while Christians were "white" and pure.

MOVING FROM RELIGION TO RACE

- One clear example is the 'New World' conquests; Indigenous people in the 'New World' were either killed or converted.

- Religion could no longer be justification for hierarchical social structuring.

- **Biological distinctions ultimately supplanted religious hierarchy with *racial* hierarchy.**

RACIALIZATION OF RELIGION IN US HISTORY

- Hierarchy of Whites in late 19th/early 20th century

- Anglo-Protestants "pure" versus "swarthy" Catholic Irish, Italians, and Germans (Lopez 1997)

- But no question they were legally White (Guglielmo 2003; Katznelson 2005)

COLOR-TYPES OF THE RACES OF MEN.
BRITISH ASSOCIATION SCALE.
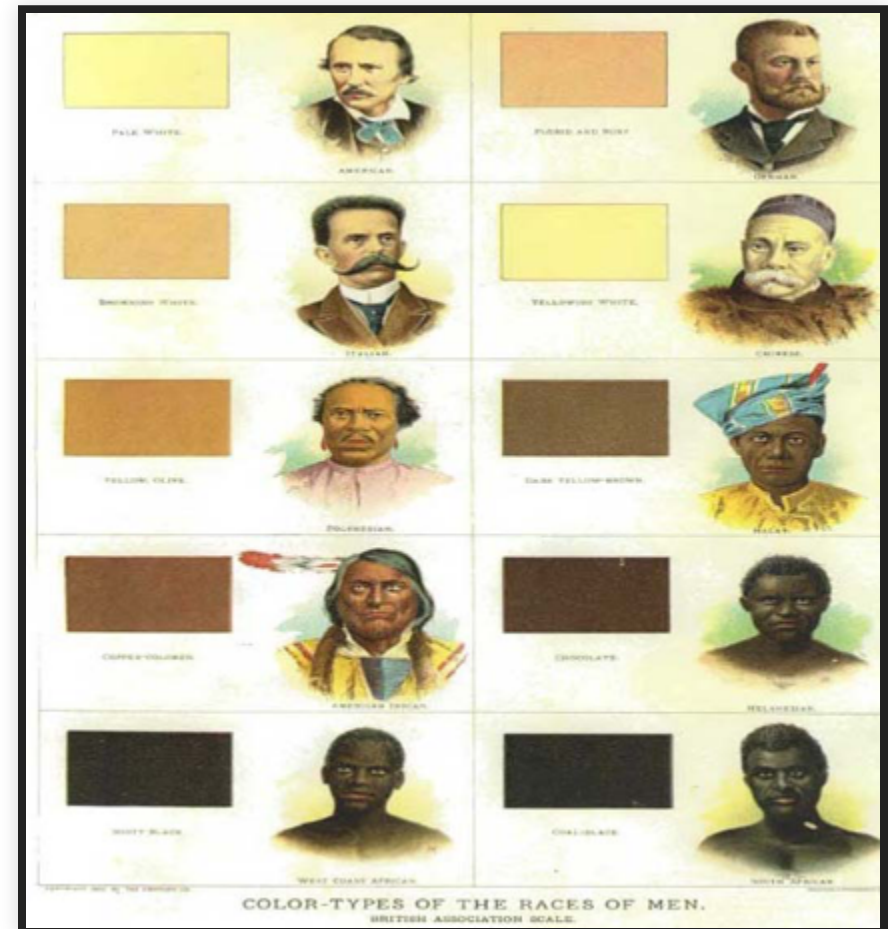
HISTORICAL CLASSIFICATION OF MENA

- Naturalization Act of 1870: Only Whites or Blacks could be citizens.

- Those who were not clearly either could not naturalize.

- This led some to petition court for White status.

- Two famous cases: Ozawa (1922) and Thind (1923).

MENA AS WHITE: RACIAL PREREQUISITE CASES

Year	Case Name	Court Decision
1909	In re Najour	MENA are White
1909	In re Halladjian	MENA are White
1910	In re Mudarri	MENA are White
1910	In re Ellis	MENA are White
1913	Ex parte Shahid	MENA are not White
1915	Dow v. U.S.	MENA are White
1925	U.S. v. Cartozian	MENA are White
1928	In re Feroz Din	MENA are not White
1942	In re Ahmed Hassan	MENA are not White
1944	Ex parte Mohriez	MENA are White

All but Dow v. US were United States Circuit Court cases

MENA AS WHITE: RACIAL PREREQUISITE CASES

Year	Case Name	Court Decision	Petitioner Religion
1909	In re Najour	MENA are White	Christian
1909	In re Halladjian	MENA are White	Christian
1910	In re Mudarri	MENA are White	Probably Christian[i]
1910	In re Ellis	MENA are White	Christian
1913	Ex parte Shahid	MENA are not White	Christian
1915	Dow v. U.S.	MENA are White	Christian
1925	U.S. v. Cartozian	MENA are White	Christian
1928	In re Feroz Din	*MENA are not White*	*Muslim*
1942	In re Ahmed Hassan	*MENA are not White*	*Muslim*
1944	Ex parte Mohriez	MENA are White	Muslim

There appears to be an historical connection between religion and race (not just one of country of origin and race)

But what about today? When it comes to societal classifications does religion also matter?

4 . 7

TESTING THE ROLE OF RELIGION ON RACIAL ASSIGNMENT

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HYPOTHESES ON WHITE ASSIGNMENT (PRE-REGISTERED)

White assignment meaning whether or not *other individuals* label an individual White.

HYPOTHESIS 1:

Respondents will be less likely to assign an individual who is from a MENA country—as compared to a country in Europe—as White, all else constant.

HYPOTHESIS 2:

Respondents will be less likely to assign Muslims as White, relative to Christians, all else constant.

HYPOTHESIS 3:

There will be an interactive effect where individuals who are both Muslim and MENA will be least likely assigned White, relative to individuals who are only Muslim or only MENA, all else constant.

HYPOTHESES ON PERCEIVED SKIN PIGMENTATION

H4: Perceived skin pigmentation will align with White assignment. Specifically:

- H4.1: Respondents will rate an individual who is from a MENA country—as compared to a country in Europe—as having darker skin pigmentation, all else constant.

- H4.2: Respondents will rate an individual who is Muslim as having darker skin pigmentation, relative to Christians, all else constant.

- H4.3: Individuals who are both Muslim and MENA will be rated as having the darkest skin pigmentation, relative to individuals who are only Muslim or only MENA, all else constant.

DESIGN

DESIGN

		Religion	
		Christian	Muslim
Country or Origin	Russian	*Russian Christian*	*Russian Muslim*
	Iranian	*Iranian Christian*	*Iranian Muslims*

ID: 83470183
Age: 28
Gender: Male
Religion: Christian
Ethnicity: Not Latino/Hispanic
Race: Some other race: Iranian

ID: 83470183
Age: 28
Gender: Male
Religion: Muslim
Ethnicity: Not Latino/Hispanic
Race: Some other race: Russian

DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Q1: Please reclassify this individual:

o   White

o   Black, African American

o   Middle Eastern, North African, Arab

o   Asian

o   American Indian or Alaskan Native

o   Pacific Islander

Q2: Rate the skin tone of this individual:

Scale of Skin Color Darkness

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

DATA

- Fielded May 5 to May 9, 2020, through Lucid

- Nationally representative sample of 1,091 respondents (n = 272 per condition) who identified themselves as non-Hispanic, non-MENA Whites

	US Census 2018	Respondents
Male	49%	48.5%
Female	51%	51.5%
18-34	27.6%	13.2%
35-54	31.8%	29.2%
55-64	17.5%	35.7%
65+	23.1%	21.9%
Less than a high school diploma	9.80%	2.7%
High school graduate (or equivalent)	27%	22.1%
Some college or associate degree	29.30%	23.9%
Bachelor's degree	20.90%	36.2%
Graduate or professional degree	13%	15.1%
Income below $50,000	35.2%	46.1%
$50,000 or higher	64.6%	54.0%

RESULTS

H1: RUSSIANS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE ASSIGNED WHITE

The Effect of Country of Origin on White Assignment

95% confidence intervals
White respondents
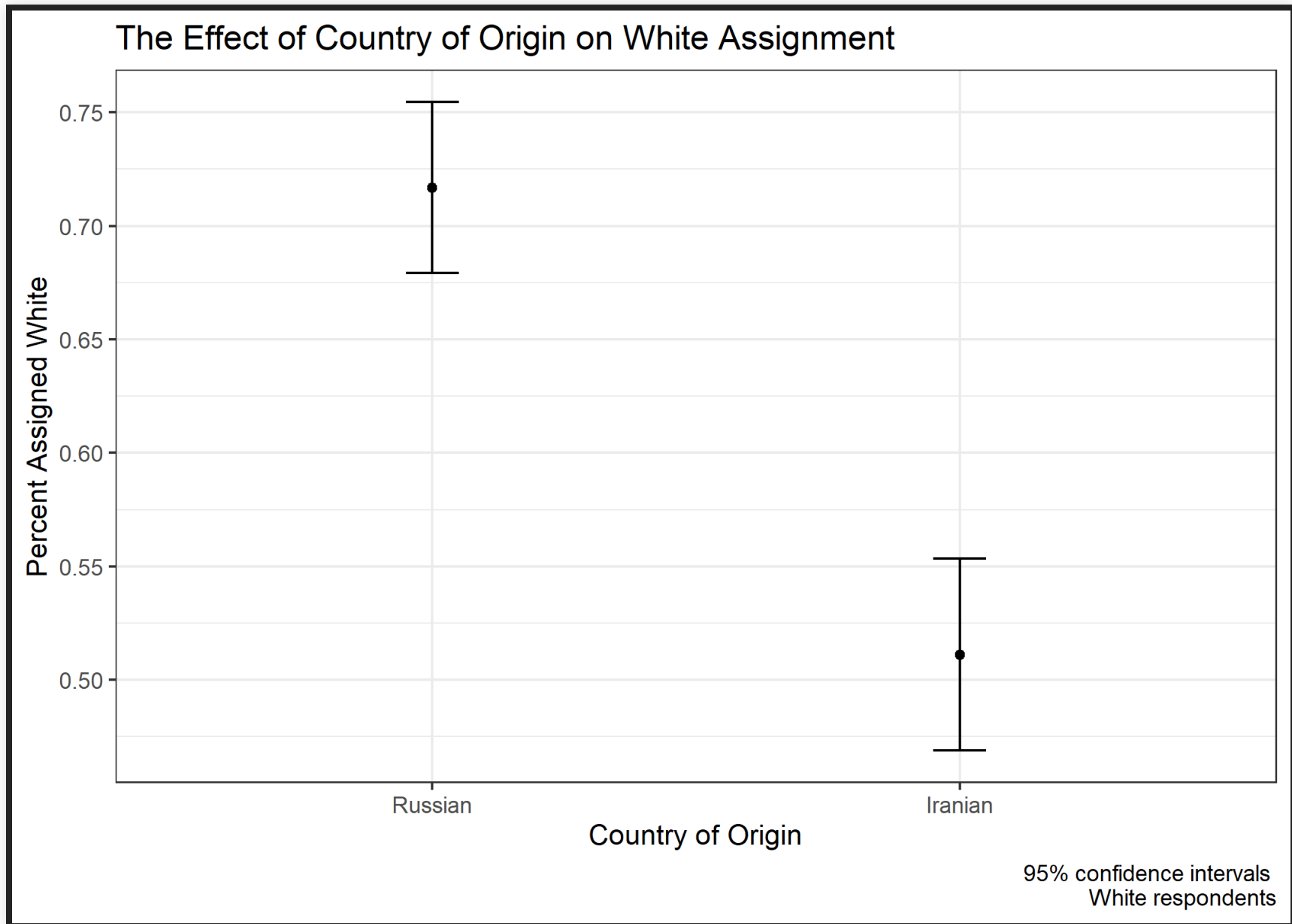
H2: CHRISTIANS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE ASSIGNED WHITE

The Effect of Religion on White Assignment

95% confidence intervals
White respondents
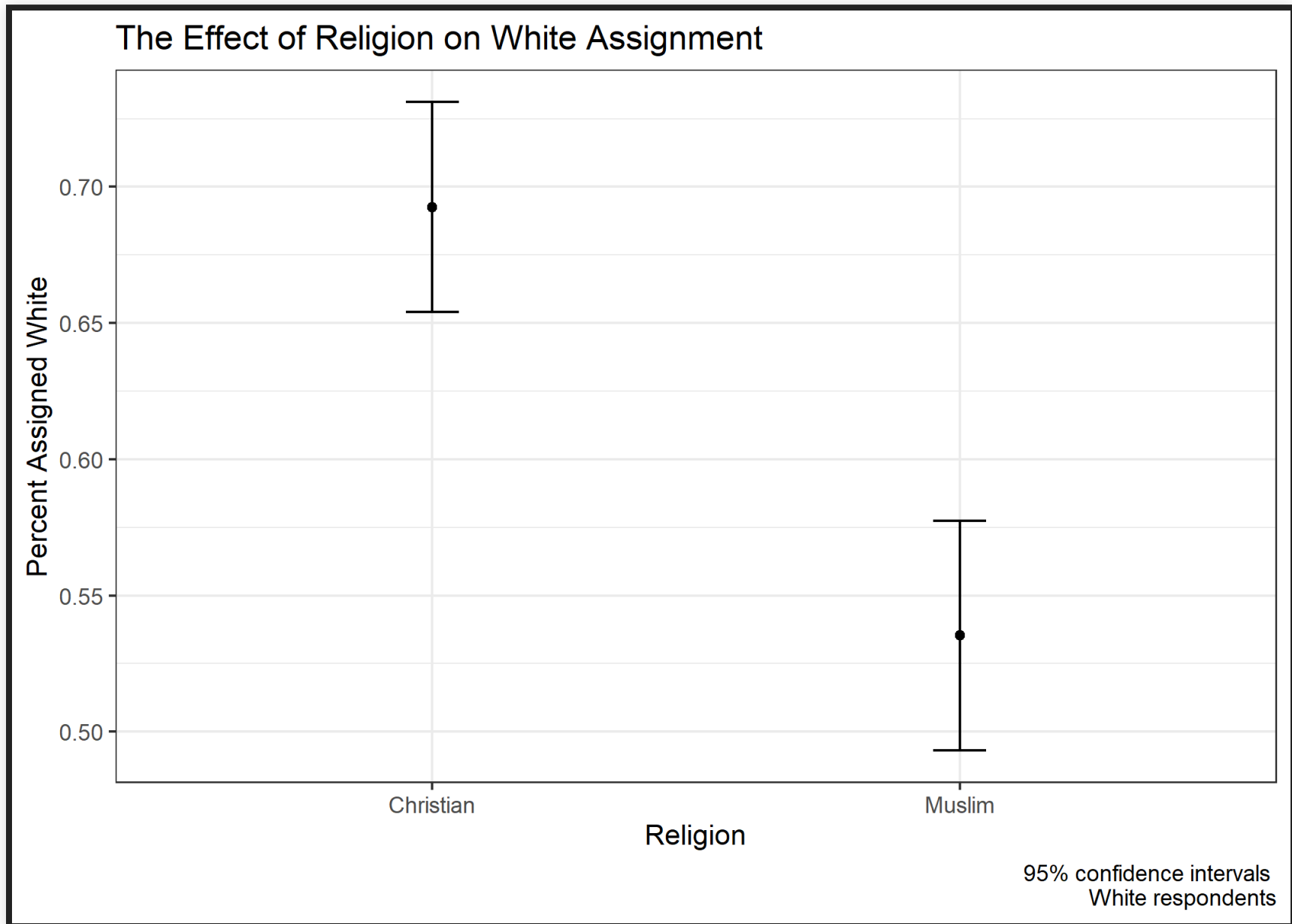
H3: RUSSIAN CHRISTIAN MOST LIKELY TO BE ASSIGNED WHITE (IRANIAN MUSLIM LEAST LIKELY)

The Interaction of Country of Origin and Religion on White Assignment

95% confidence intervals
White respondents

6 . 4
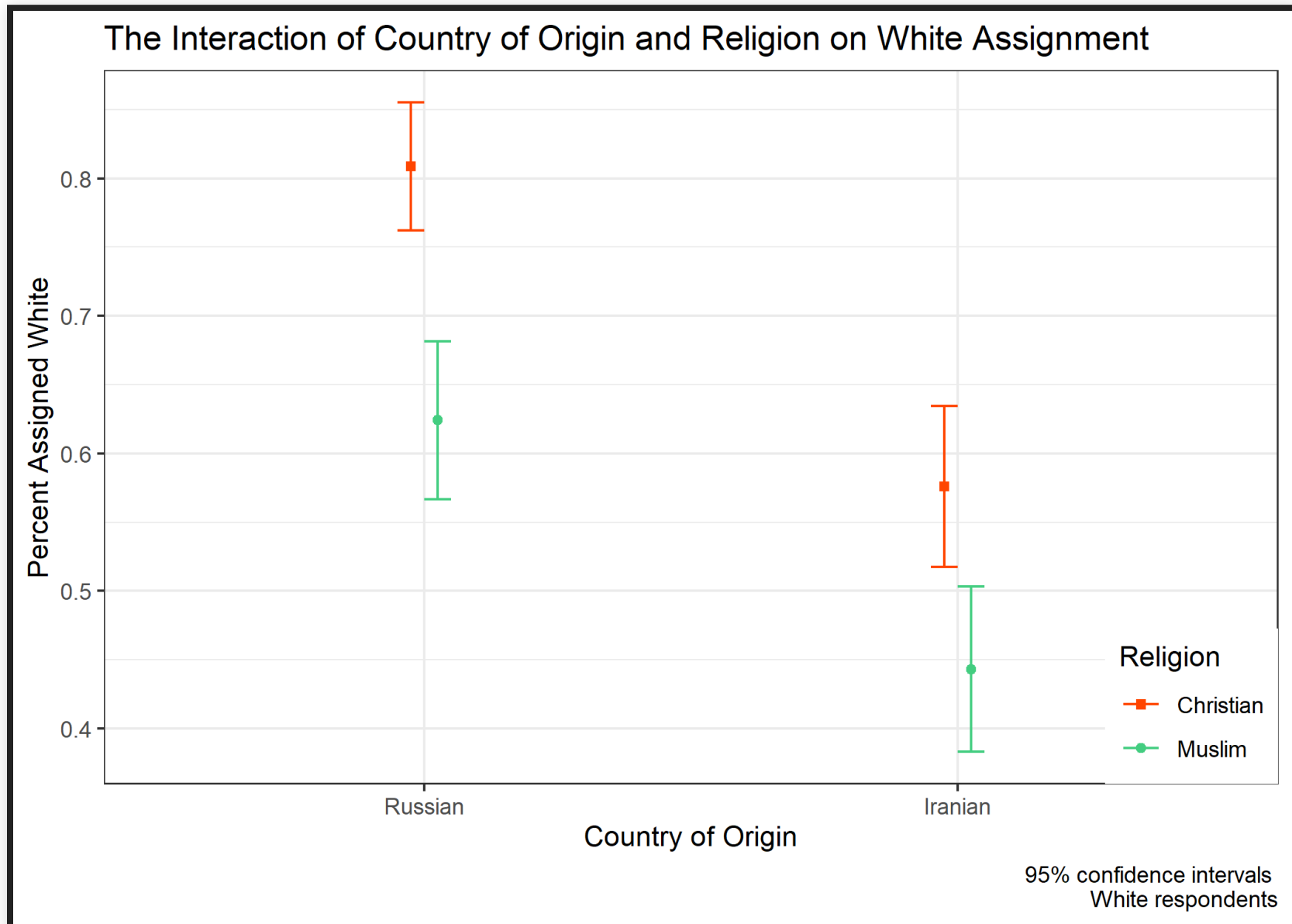
H4.1: RUSSIANS ARE LIGHTER THAN IRANIANS (P < 0.1)

The Effect of Country of Origin on Percieved Skin Pigmentation

95% confidence intervals
White respondents
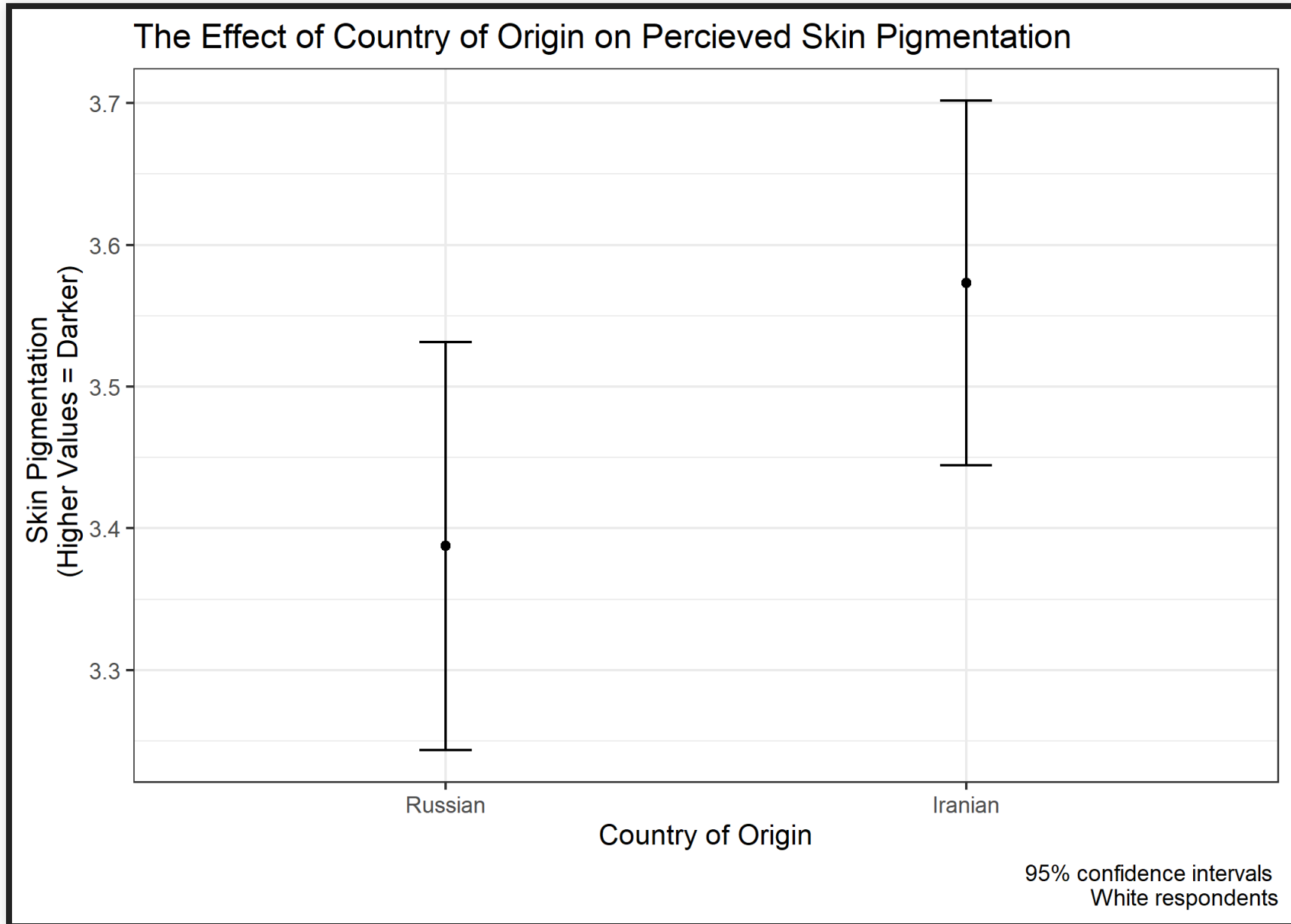
H4.2: CHRISTIANS LIGHTER THAN MUSLIMS (P < 0.05)

The Effect of Religion on Percieved Skin Pigmentation

95% confidence intervals
White respondents
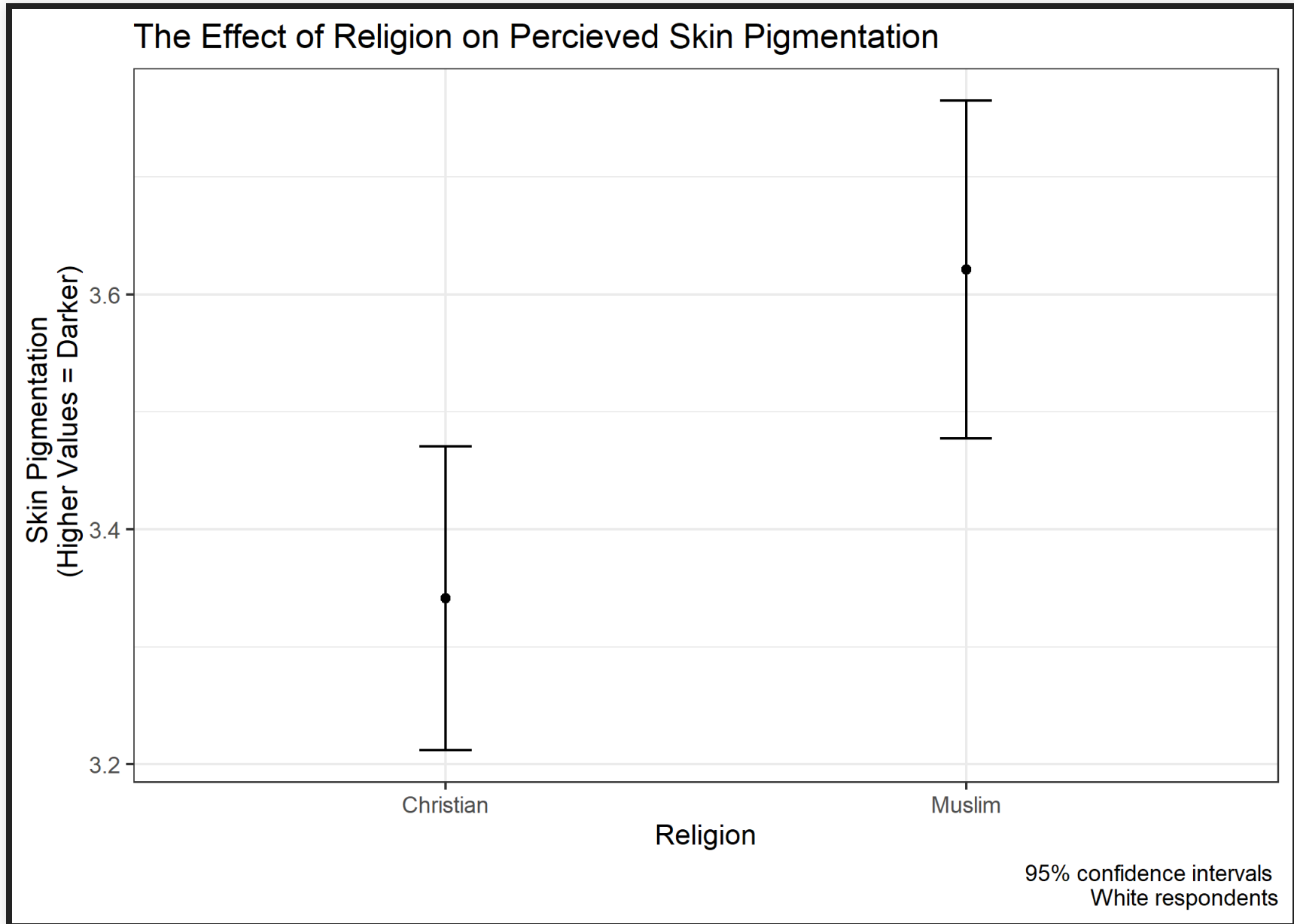
H4.3: IRANIAN MUSLIM IS THE DARKEST, BUT RUSSIAN CHRISTIAN IS NOT THE LIGHTEST

The Interaction of Country of Origin and Religion on Perceived Skin Color

95% confidence intervals
White respondents
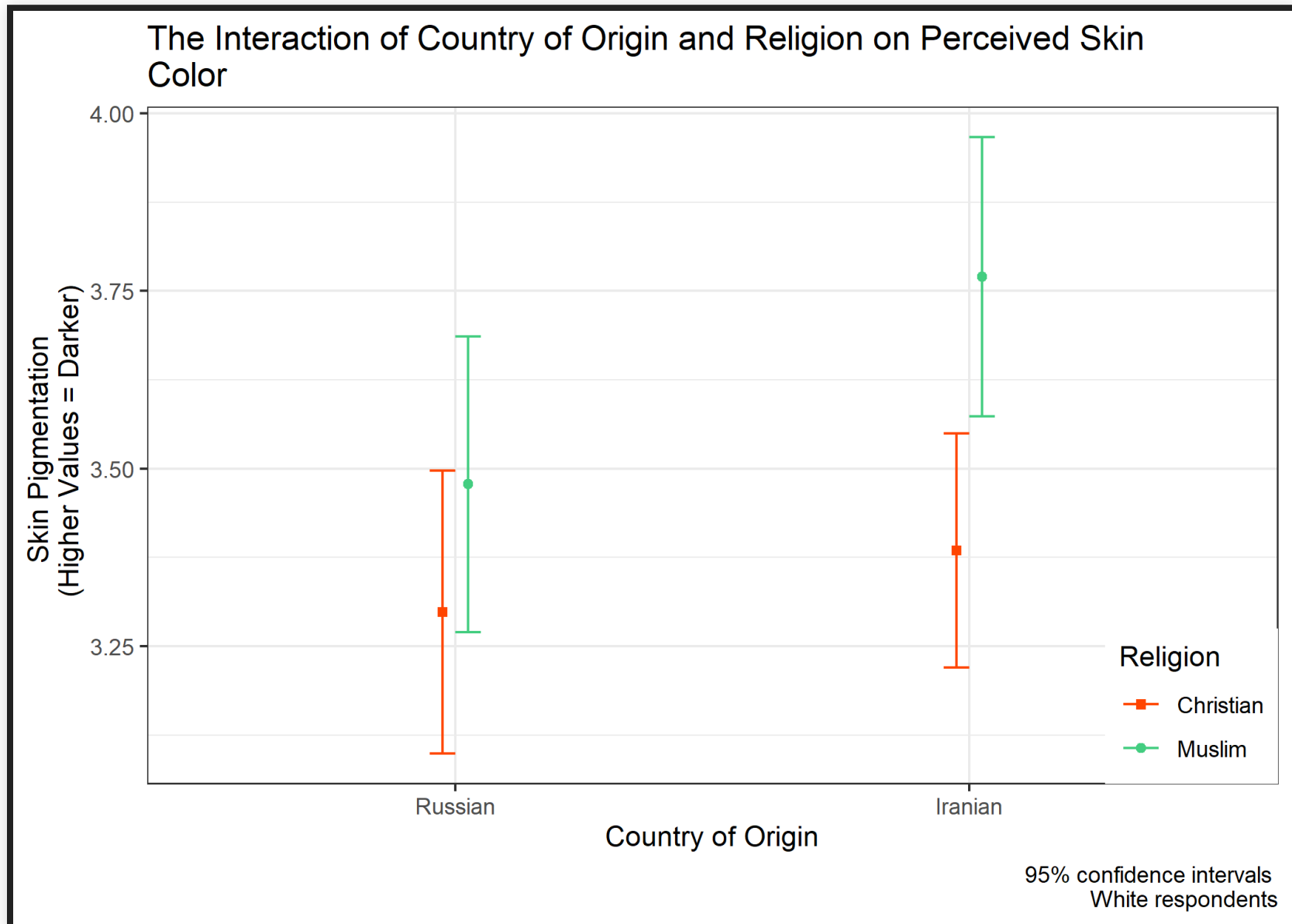
DISCUSSION

How do people perceive others with unclear identities?
Do government classification schemes influence those perceptions?

- In some cases, religion provides just as much of a 'racial cue' as country of origin.

- Religious cues can be as strong as country of origin.

- Despite governmental classification, it appears White Americans have a distinct assignment scheme which does not place MENA (proxied by Iranians) and Muslims firmly inside of Whiteness.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

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WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

- Whiteness is not always problematized, taken as base/default category, "bland nothingness" (Painter, 2010; see also, Fanon, 1986; Masuoka & Junn, 2013; Waters, 1990).

- Studies on White identity take for granted *who* is White.

  - Jardina's (2019) work investigates White identity politics, but presents Whites as ethnoracially and religiously homogeneous.

  - It does not include: White Latinx, MENA, non-Christians.

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

- Who counts as White changes positionality on American racial hierarchy.

- The racial hierarchy describes the treatment, opportunities, and experiences of different racial groups in America.

- There is a disconnect for MENA individuals who legally at the top of the hierarchy but are subjected to racialization nevertheless.

  - Ahmmad Pourghoraishi, an Iranian American commercial truck driver who was a victim of an 'unclassified' hate crime because it was technically 'White-on-White'.

REST OF THE DISSERTATION

- Religion complicates our current understanding of the racial hierarchy consisting of two dimension.

- A conjoint experiment about the intersectionality of MENA and Muslim identity on belonging.

- Conjoints on immigrant preferences rarely include religion, and do not consider the intersection of religion and country of origin.

- I show the intersections of Muslim and MENA identity is associated with decreased likelihood of being selected for a green card.

REST OF THE DISSERTATION

- Respondent-Driven Sample of MENA individuals in America

- It includes a survey experiment on MENA identity: the extent to which it exists and how it influences political attitudes.

- It also includes a survey on beliefs about what White Americans believe about the group (e.g. second order beliefs)

- Interviews with MENA individuals in America from the RDS

THANK YOU!

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NEXT WEEK AT MPOSS

September 7: Special panel on Roma communities with Margareta Matache, Angela Kocze, Senada Sali, and Ioanida Costache.

APPENDIX SLIDES

EAST, SOUTH, SOUTHEAST ASIAN RACIAL PREREQUISITE COURT CASES

Year	Case	Outcome
1878	In re Ah Yup	Not white
1890	In re Hong Yen Chang	Not white
1894	In re Po	Not white
1894	In re Saito	Not white
1895	In re Gee Hop	Not white
1902	In re Yamashita	Not white
1908	In re Buntaro Kumagai	Not white
1909	In re Knight	Not white
1910	Bessho v. U.S.	Not white
1910	U.S. v. Dolla	White
1910	U.S. v. Balsara	White
1912	In re Alverto	Not white
1912	In re Young	Not white
1916	In re Mallari	Not white
1916	In re Lampitoe	Not white
1917	In re Rallos	Not white
1917	In re Sadar Bhagwab Singh	Not white
1919	In re Mohan Singh	White
1921	Petition of Easurk Emsen Charr	Not white
1922	Ozawa v. U.S.	Not white
1923	Sato v. Hall	Not white
1923	U.S. v. Thind	Not white
1923	U.S. v. Akhay Kumar Mozumdar	Not white
1925	U.S. v. Ali	Not white
1927	U.S. v. Javier	Not white
1927	In re Fisher	Not white
1928	U.S. v. Gokhale	Not white
1935	De La Ysla v. U.S.	Not white
1939	Wadia v. U.S.	Not white
1941	De Cano v. State	Not white
1942	Kharaiti Ram Samras v. U.S.	Not white

DECISION TO INCLUDE MENA OPTION

Survey Option	Iran Race Classification	N
Standard Census Options	White	42
Standard Census Options	Middle Eastern or North African	NA
Standard Census Options	Asian	17
Standard Census Options	American Indian or Alaska Native	1
Standard Census Options	Other	34
MENA Option Included	White	1
MENA Option Included	Middle Eastern or North African	100
MENA Option Included	Asian	0
MENA Option Included	American Indian or Alaska Native	0
MENA Option Included	Other	1

CORRELATION BETWEEN WHITE ASSIGNMENT AND PIGMENTATION

Pearson Correlation Coefficient
0.233

EFFECT SIZES

Relationship	Cohen's D
Country of Origin on White Assignment	0.4322622
Religion on White Assignment	0.3272136
Country of Origin on Perceived Skin Pigmentation	-0.1138679
Religion on Perceived Skin Pigmentation	-0.1721253

WHO IS WHITE?

	White Assignment		
Iranian	-0.206*** (0.029)		
Muslim		-0.157*** (0.029)	
Russian Muslim			-0.185*** (0.040)
Iranian Christian			-0.233*** (0.040)
Iranian Muslim			-0.365*** (0.040)
Constant (Russian Christian)	0.717*** (0.020)	0.693*** (0.020)	0.809*** (0.028)
Observations	1,091	1,091	1,091
Adjusted R^2	0.044	0.025	0.070
F Statistic	50.958*** (df = 1; 1089)	29.197*** (df = 1; 1089)	28.152*** (df = 3; 1087)
Note:			*p<0.1;* ***p<0.05****;* p<0.01

WHO IS DARKER?

	Perceived Pigmentation		
Iranian	-0.206*** (0.029)		
Muslim		-0.157*** (0.029)	
Russian Muslim			-0.185*** (0.040)
Iranian Christian			-0.233*** (0.040)
Iranian Muslim			-0.365*** (0.040)
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Note:			*p<0.1; **p<0.05**; p<0.01*

MODERATION

PARTISANSHIP

	White Assignment	Perceived Pigmentation
Russian Muslim	-0.130* (0.072)	0.100 (0.249)
Iranian Christian	-0.263*** (0.075)	-0.101 (0.257)
Iranian Muslim	-0.387*** (0.074)	0.466* (0.255)
Party ID (Republicanness)	0.059 (0.079)	-0.167 (0.272)
Russian Muslim * Party ID	-0.090 (0.110)	0.139 (0.379)
Iranian Christian * Party ID	0.062 (0.111)	0.360 (0.384)
Iranian Muslim * Party ID	0.044 (0.113)	0.032 (0.390)
Constant	0.778*** (0.052)	3.374*** (0.178)
Observations	1,062	1,062
Adjusted R^2	0.069	0.007
F Statistic (df = 7; 1054)	12.236***	2.024**
Note:		$p<0.1$; **$p<0.05$**; $p<0.01$

EDUCATION

	White Assignment	**Perceived Pigmentation**
Russian Muslim	-0.146 (0.137)	-0.265 (0.466)
Iranian Christian	-0.049 (0.136)	0.168 (0.464)
Iranian Muslim	-0.206 (0.135)	0.590 (0.458)
Education	0.008 (0.027)	0.005 (0.092)
Russian Muslim * Education	-0.009 (0.039)	0.113 (0.131)
Iranian Christian * Education	-0.049 (0.038)	-0.018 (0.130)
Iranian Muslim * Education	-0.041 (0.039)	-0.030 (0.132)
Constant	0.774*** (0.095)	3.268*** (0.325)
Observations	1,012	1,012
Adjusted R^2	0.059	0.008
F Statistic (df = 7; 1004)	10.038***	2.162**
Note:		*p<0.1;* ***p<0.05;*** p<0.01

INCOME

	White Assignment	Perceived Pigmentation
Russian Muslim	-0.179*** (0.055)	-0.179*** (0.055)
Iranian Christian	-0.238*** (0.055)	-0.238*** (0.055)
Iranian Muslim	-0.324*** (0.055)	-0.324*** (0.055)
50,000 or Higher	0.017 (0.057)	0.017 (0.057)
Russian Muslim * 50,000 or Higher	0.001 (0.081)	0.001 (0.081)
Iranian Christian * 50,000 or Higher	0.026 (0.081)	0.026 (0.081)
Iranian Muslim * 50,000 or Higher	-0.085 (0.082)	-0.085 (0.082)
Constant	0.803*** (0.039)	0.803*** (0.039)
Observations	1,062	1,062
Adjusted R^2	0.067	0.067
F Statistic (df = 7; 1054)	11.840***	11.840***
Note:		*p<0.1;* ***p<0.05;*** p<0.01

AGE

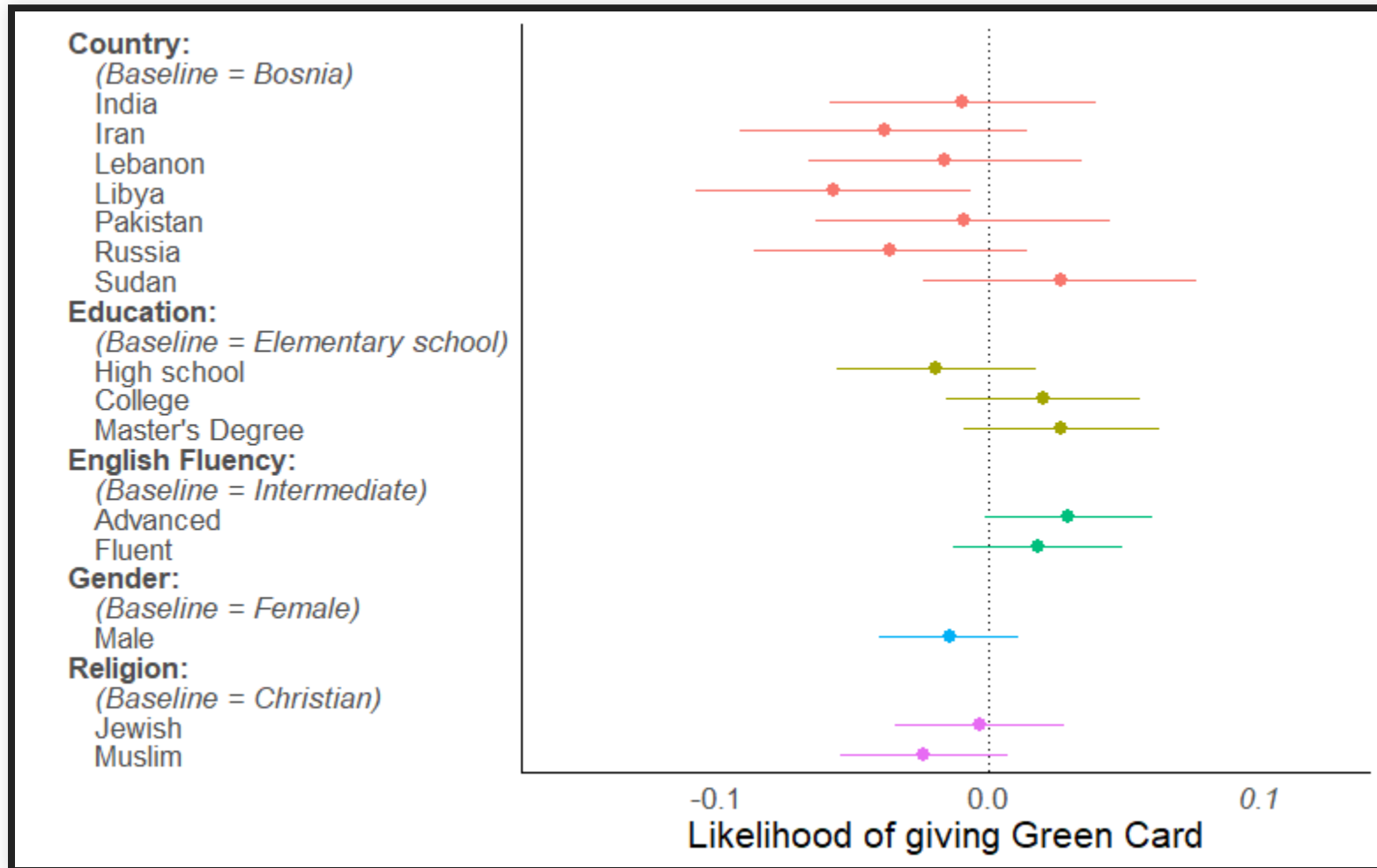|	White Assignment	Perceived Pigmentation
Russian Muslim	-0.060 (0.116)	-0.060 (0.116)
Iranian Christian	0.006 (0.119)	0.006 (0.119)
Iranian Muslim	-0.207* (0.117)	-0.207* (0.117)
Age	0.008 (0.029)	0.008 (0.029)
Russian Muslim * Age	-0.047 (0.041)	-0.047 (0.041)
Iranian Christian * Age	-0.088** (0.042)	-0.088** (0.042)
Iranian Muslim *Age	-0.059 (0.042)	-0.059 (0.042)
Constant	0.789*** (0.082)	0.789*** (0.082)
Observations	1,091	1,091
Adjusted R^2	0.077	0.077
F Statistic (df = 7; 1083)	13.908***	13.908***
Note:		$p<0.1$; $\boldsymbol{p<0.05}$; $p<0.01$

CONJOINT

DATA

- Survey conducted by Bovitz, Inc from August 12-24, 2019

- 600 respondents White, non-Hispanic/Latino

DESIGN

- Forced-choice, conjoint experiment testing the effects of a series of randomly-assigned attributes

- DV "Which immigrant should the US give a green card to?"

Attributes	Levels
Education	Elementary; high school; college; master's degree
Gender	Male; female
English Proficiency	Intermediate; advanced; fluent
Religion	Christian; Jewish; Muslim
Country of Origin	Bosnia/Russia, Lebanon/Iran, Sudan/Libya, India/Pakistan
Race	White, North African/Black, Middle Eastern, South Asian

DIRECT EFFECTS

INTERACTION