

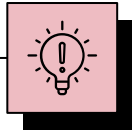
Machine Learning & Abolitionism



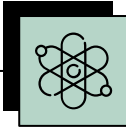
By Elliot Richardson

Today's presentation:

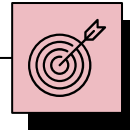
What & why?



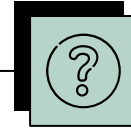
How?



Results



Q&A





Targeting 101: Partisan scores

Partisan score

Noun ▪ [pah-r-tuh-zuhn, -suhn] [skawr, skohr]

A prediction of someone's support for a particular political party in the form of a score between 1-100 that is generated by applying machine learning to both voter file and consumer data.



Targeting 101: Partisan scores



Your base

High scores (~70+)

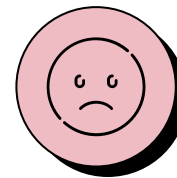
Reliable supporters,
potential volunteers



Toss-up

Medium scores (40-70)

Potentially persuadable,
majority of outreach



Opponents

Low scores (< 40)

Opposed to mission,
keep it low-key

What am I doing?

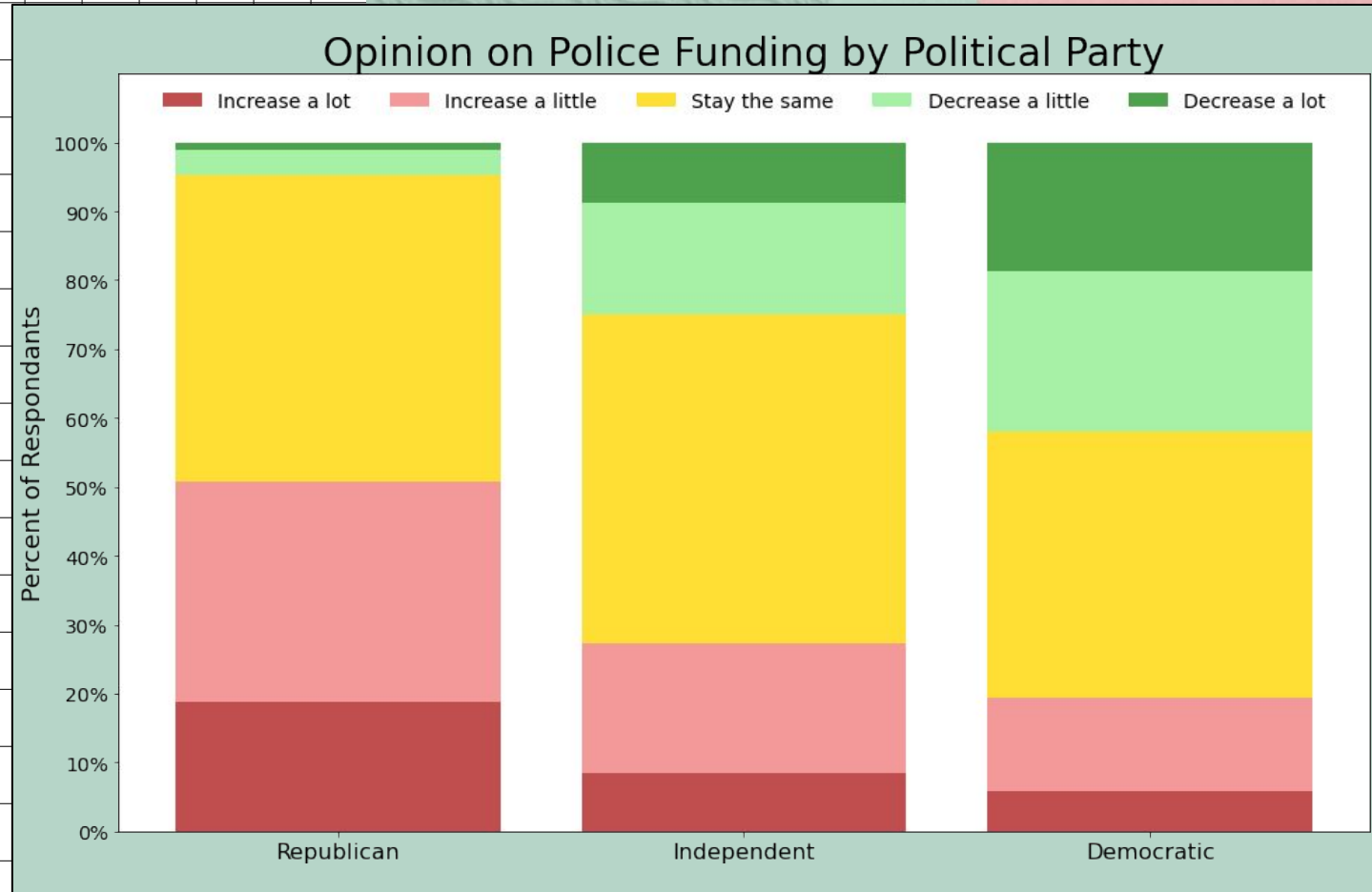
- Utilizing information a campaign might realistically have
 - Age, gender, race, location, voter registration, etc
- Predicting support for defunding police as proxy for abolitionism
 - i.e. Generating an “abolition score”

Why am I doing it?

- Abolition doesn't line up perfectly with partisan ideology
 - i.e. GOP-leaning libertarians might be more supportive than moderate Democrats with relatives on the force

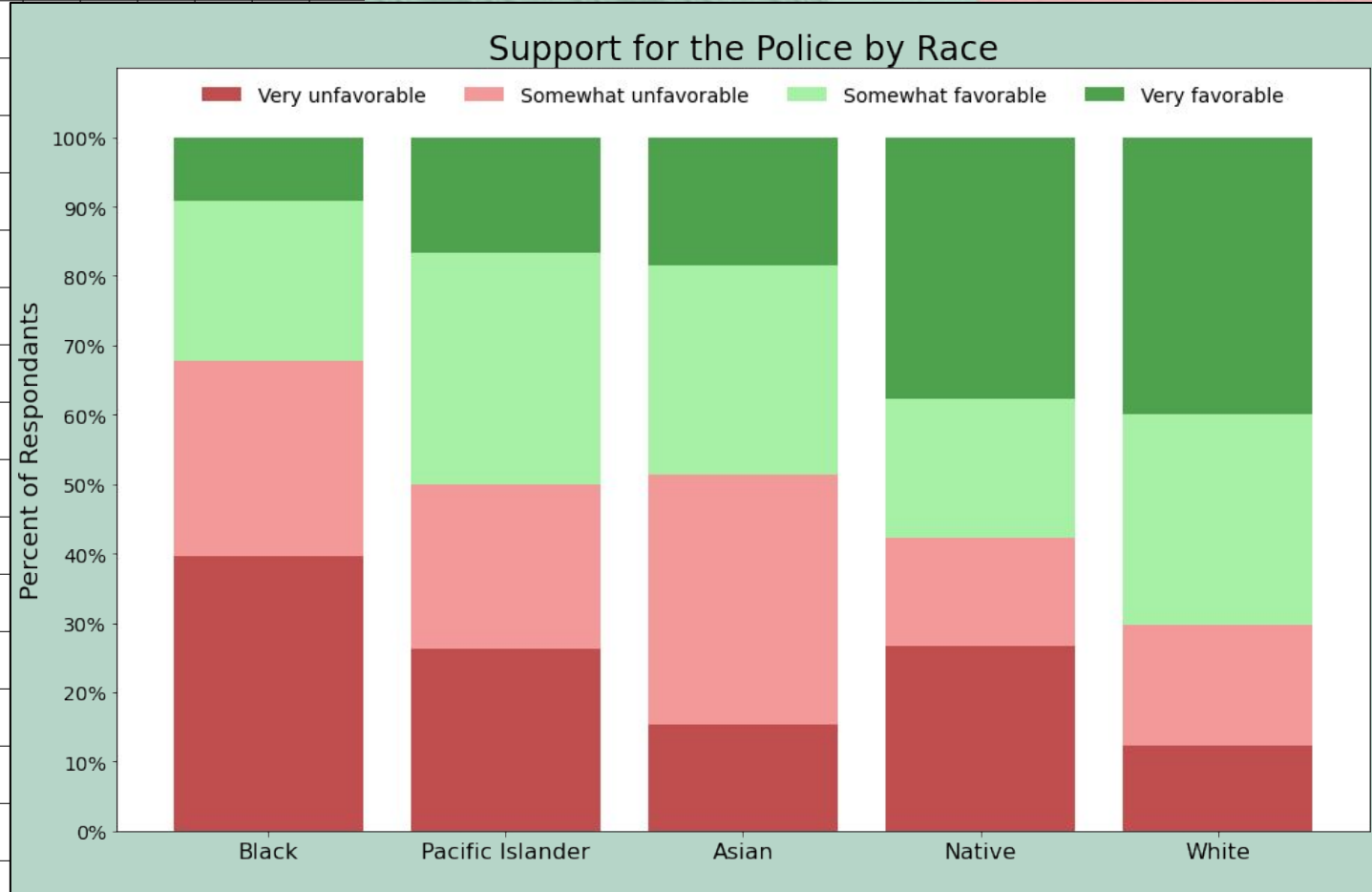
Findings:

As expected, Dems support at highest rate, but still a minority



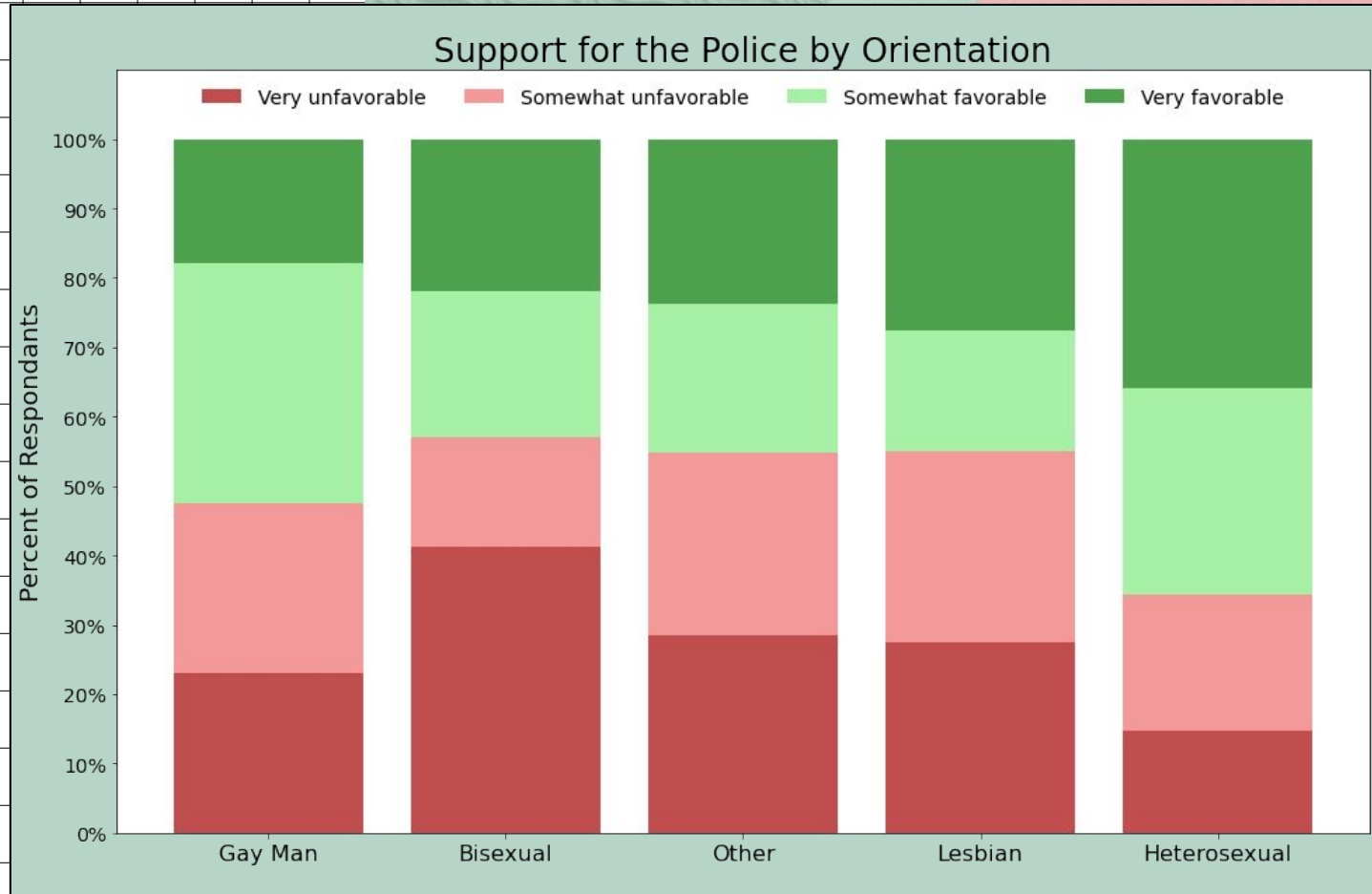
Findings:

Marginalized folks have less favorable opinions of the police



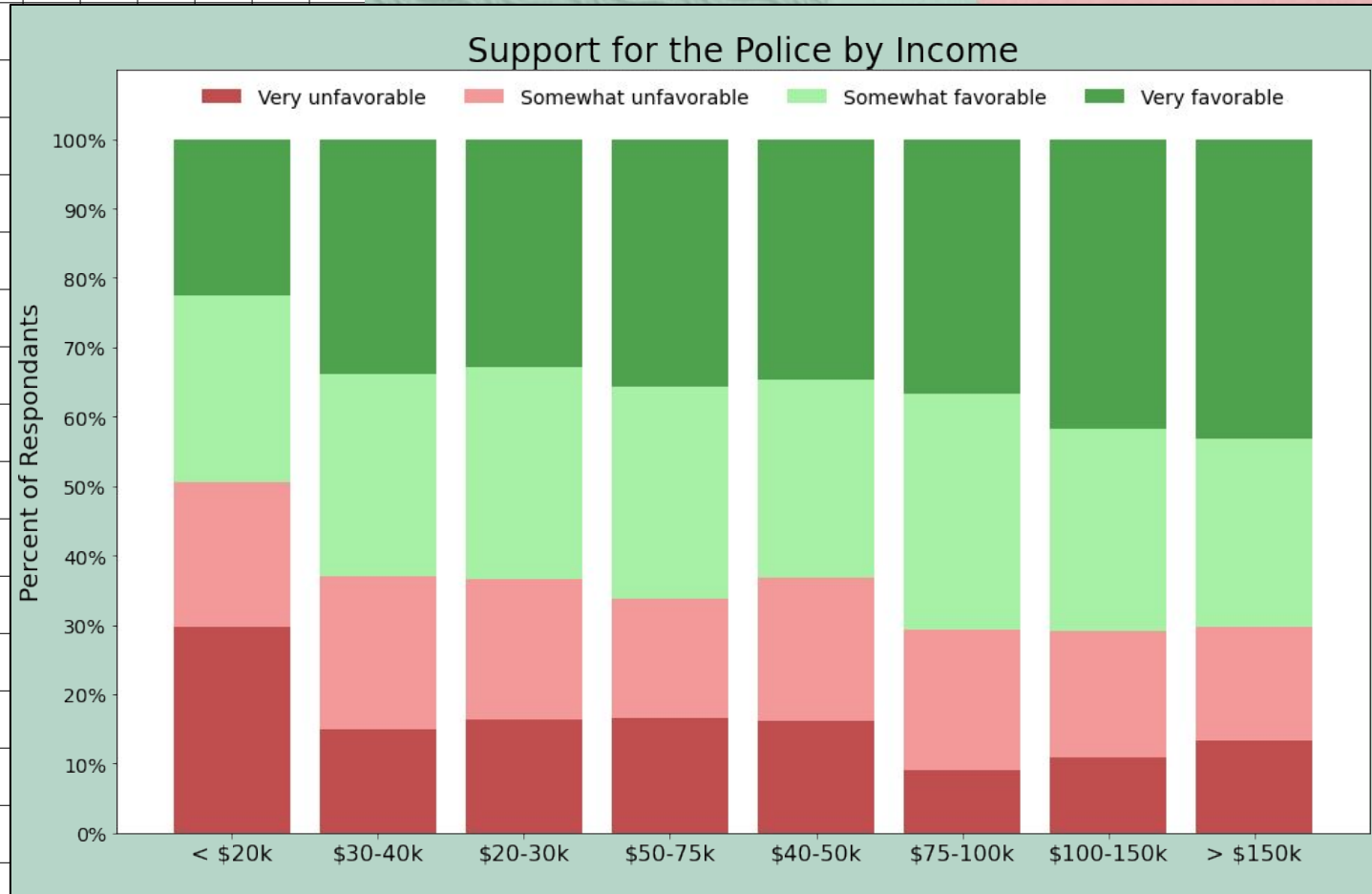
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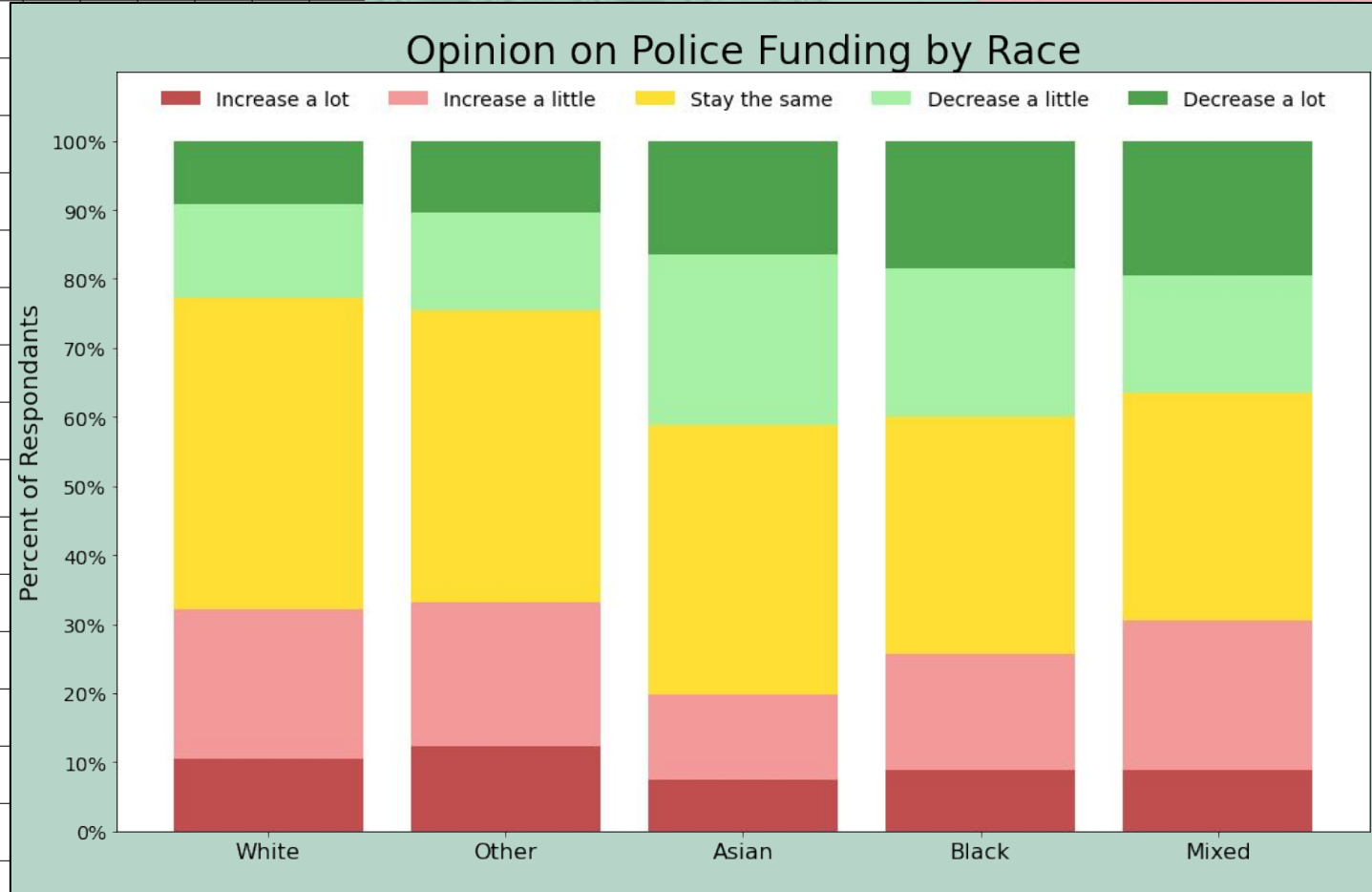
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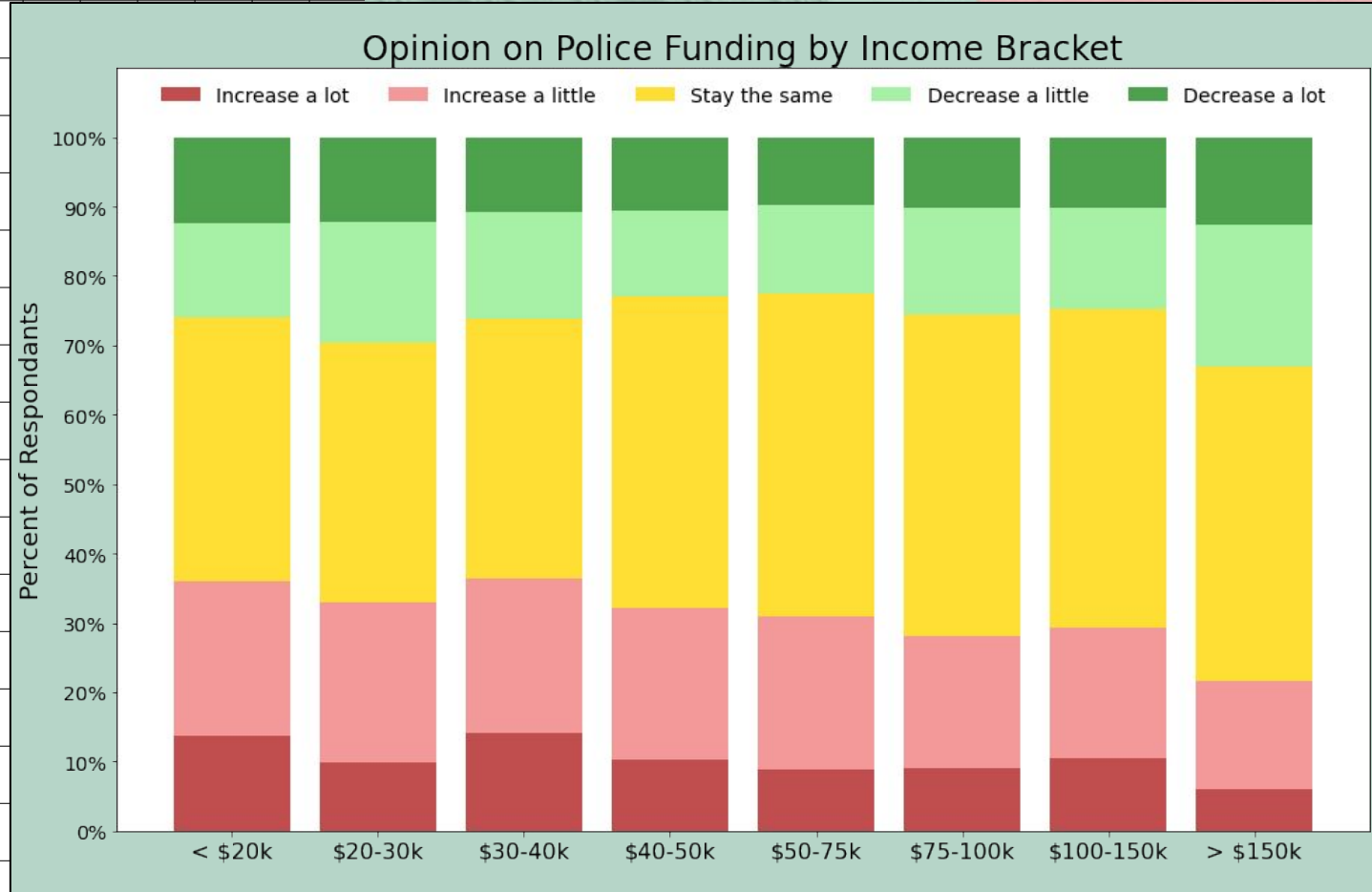
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However,
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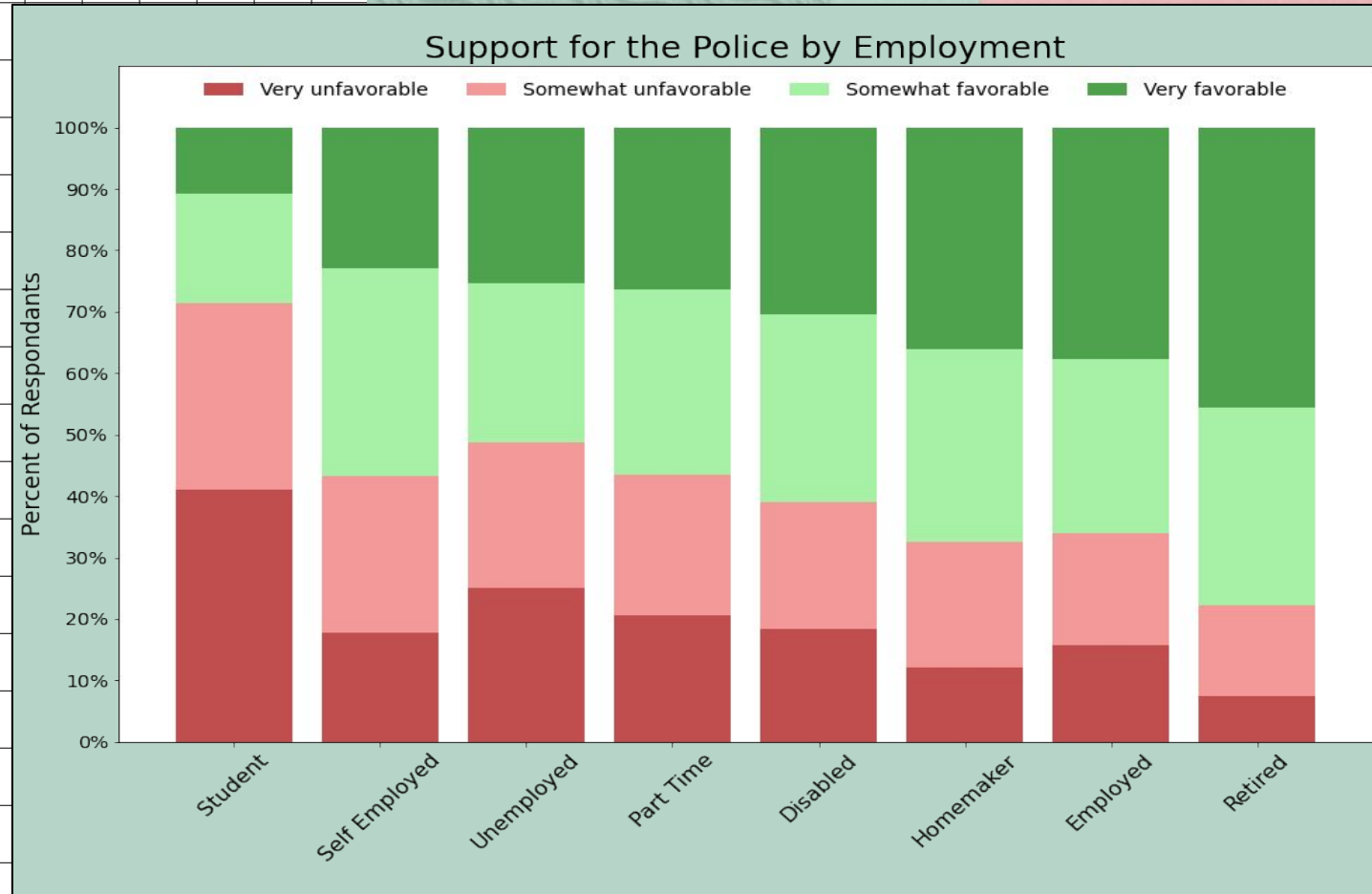
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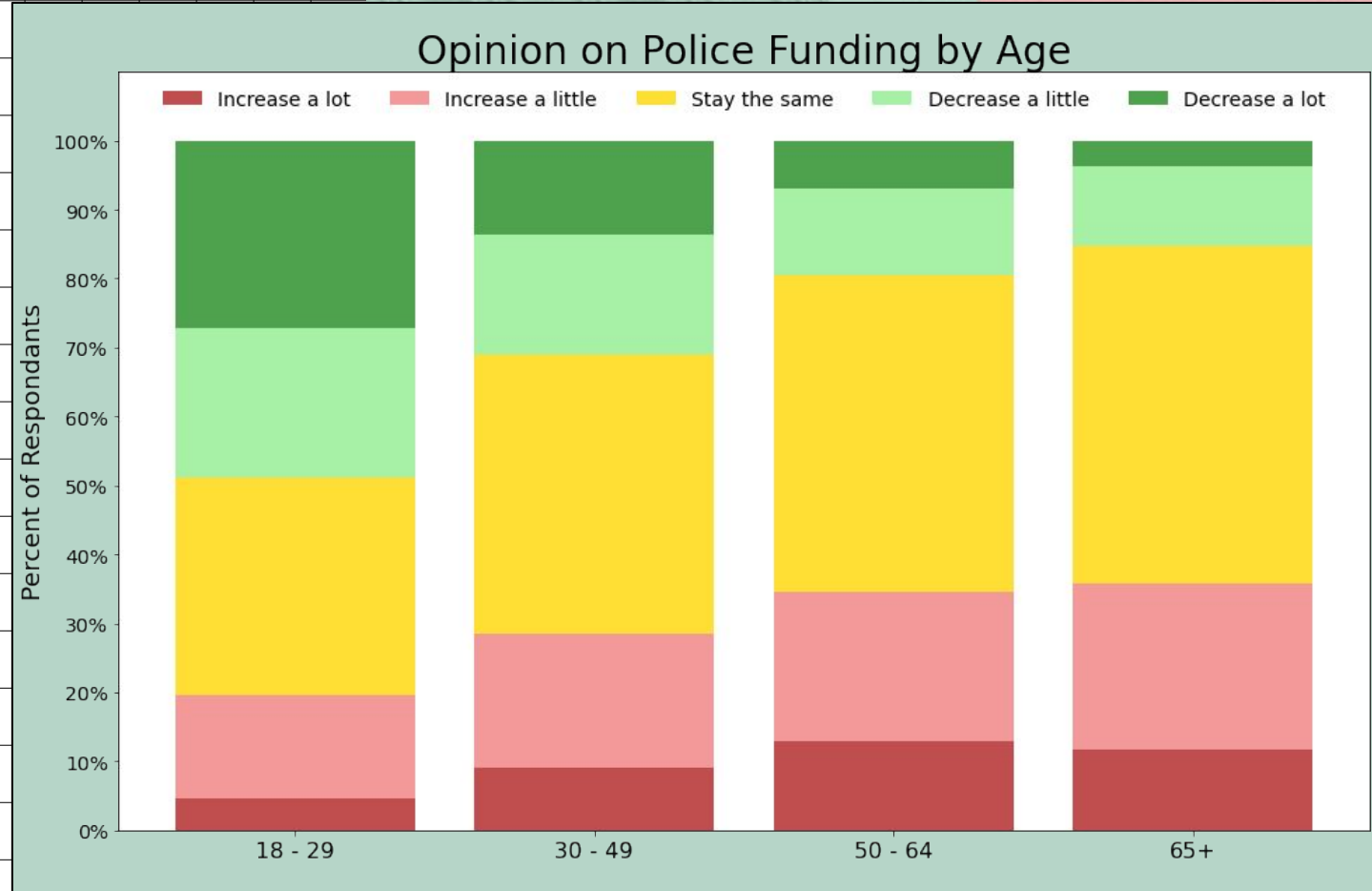
Findings:

Youth and students will be the driving force of this movement



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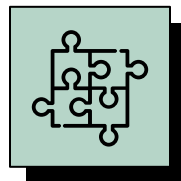


My approach: Throw stuff at the wall



See what sticks

Tried 10+ different types of models, evaluated, and then tuned the top four



Combine stickiness

Ensembled the best tuned models to utilize their collective wisdom

Model performance



- Not great on either dataset
 - Favorability: Average error of ± 30 ($R^2 = .2672$)
 - Defund support: Average error of ± 24 ($R^2 = .2325$)
- Things to note:
 - Targeting firms have consumer data
 - Continuous / discrete & ordinal
 - Very low R^2 scores are normal in social sciences

Thank you!

Any questions?

