Making Migration Sexy: How State and National Policies Influence Migration of Same-Sex Couples

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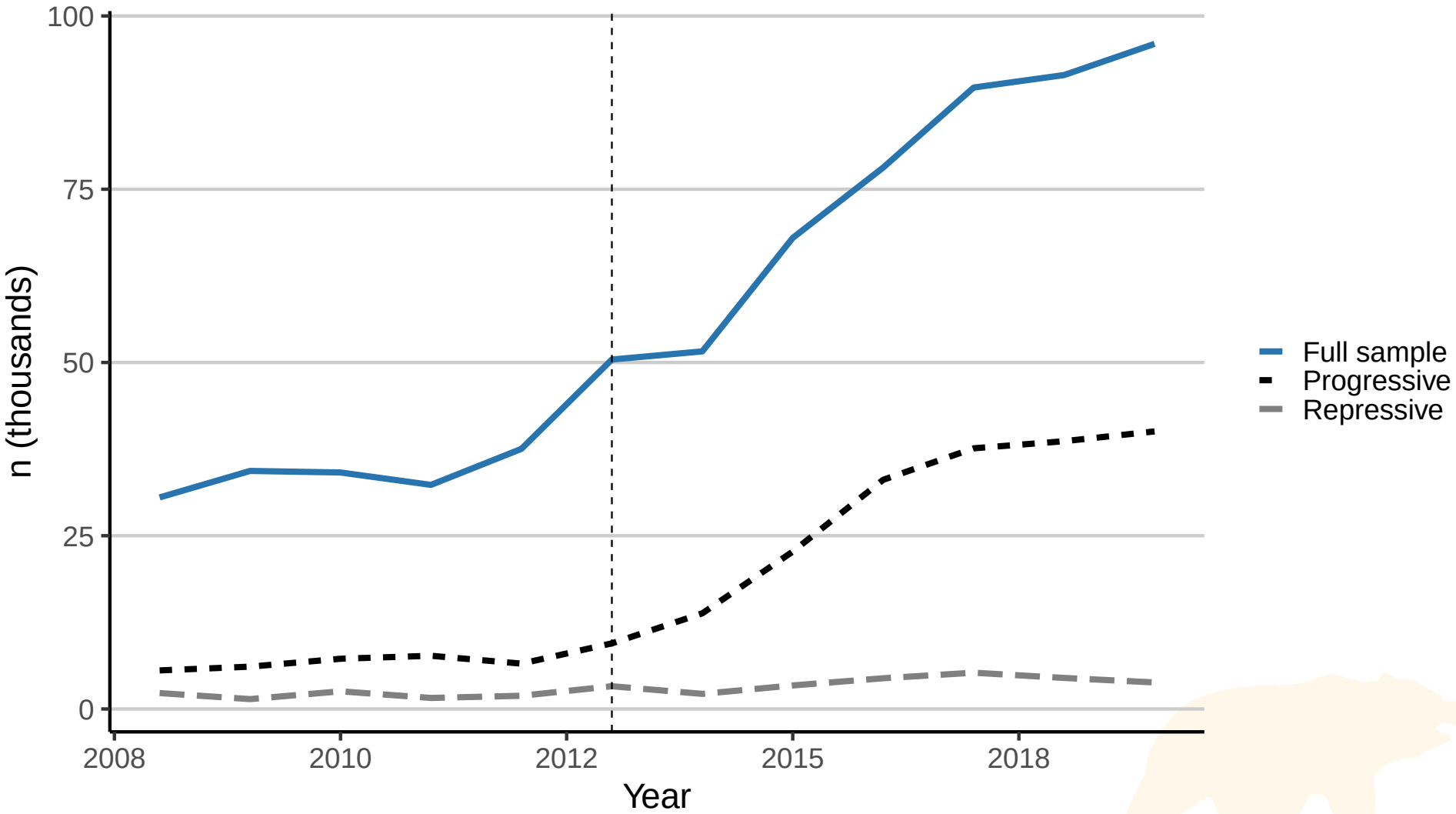
PRINCETON

Introduction

- In 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the Defense of Marriage Act
  - Allowing same-sex couples to apply for spousal/marriage visas
- From 2013 to 2019, 156% increase in mixed-citizenship same-sex couples, compared to 8% for different-sex
- But from where do these couples come?
  - Do LGB policy environments, both at country of origin and in U.S. states, contribute toward the migration of immigrants in same-sex couples?

Introduction



Our Intervention

- Little research on queer migration beyond asylum and refugees
- Migration theory typically emphasizes economic and network theories
- We aim to demonstrate how culture and identity interact with policy to shape migratory pathways

How Country-Origin LGB Policies Influence Migration

- Policies reflect and are constituted by cultural environments
- Progressive LGB policies (e.g., marriage equality), make desiring same-sex union possible
- Regressive policies may: limit aspirations for same-sex union, public disclosure of such unions, and, ultimately, undermine credibility in visa applications.

Data

- 2008 to 2019 American Community Survey (ACS)
  - immigrated at age 18 or older post-1990
  - 18 to 64 at time of survey
- Immigrants in same-sex couples are identified as foreign-born respondents who live with a same-sex married or unmarried partner
  - This necessarily excludes single and non-cohabiting LGB individuals

Data

- Data structure: state-year-group counts
  - groups: same sex $\times$ mixed citizenship
  - e.g. number of same-sex mixed-citizenship couples living in Arizona in 2012
- Explanatory variable: country of origin LGBT policy index (sum of 14 policies) (Velasco 2020)

Sample sizes

Composition	Citizenship	n (unweighted)	n (weighted)
Different sex	Mixed citizenship	467,611	50,313,621
Different sex	Same citizenship	11,103,024	1,046,422,984
Same sex	Mixed citizenship	7,305	694,122
Same sex	Same citizenship	147,459	13,630,989

Methods

- Difference-in-differences-in-differences (DDD)

$$y_{gst} = \exp[\beta_0 + \beta_1 post_t + \beta_2(M_g \times post_t) + \beta_3(S_g \times post_t) + \beta_4(M_g \times S_g \times post_t) + \alpha_{gs} + \gamma_t + \epsilon_{gst}]$$

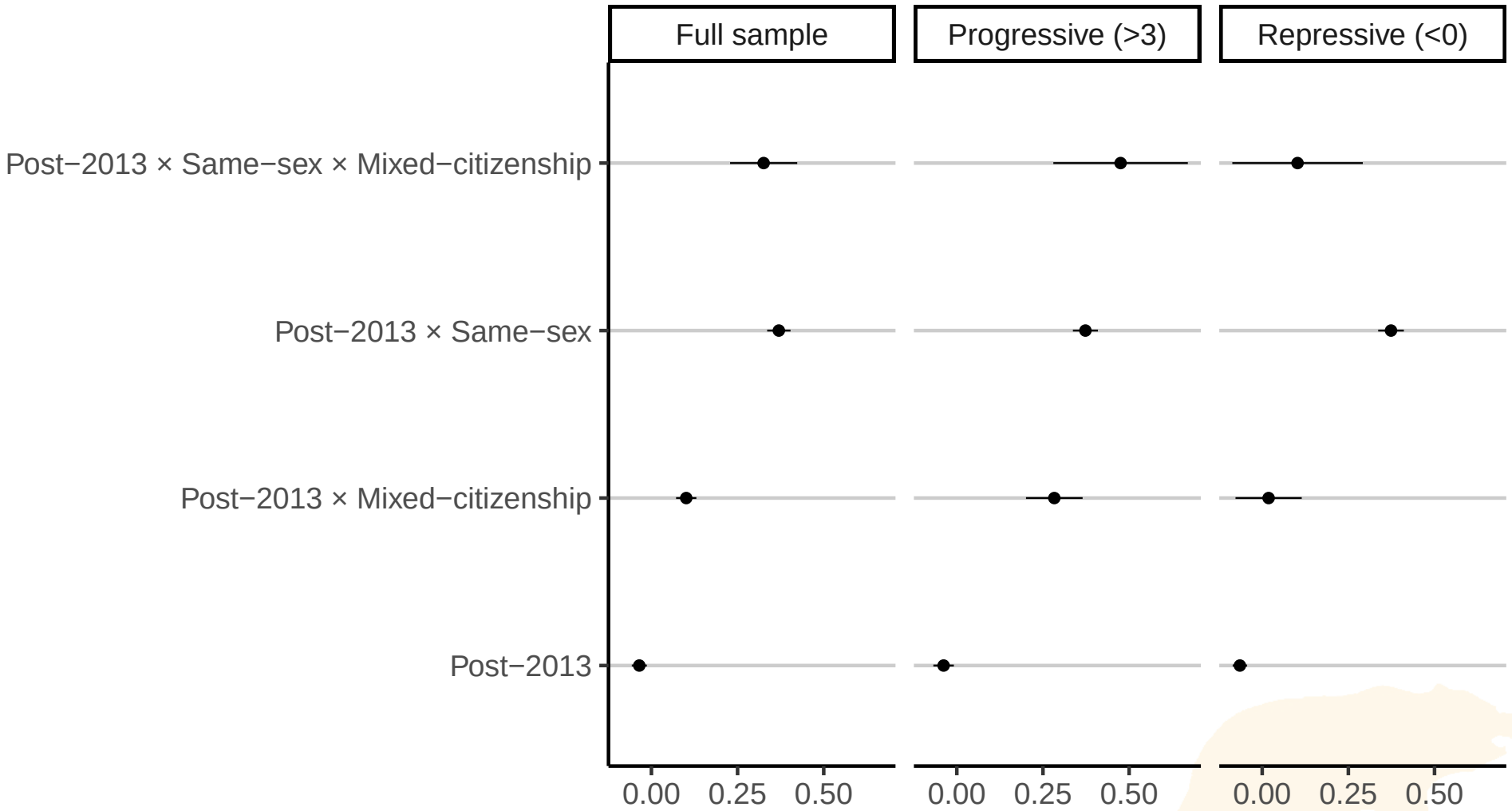
- where y_{gst} is the count of individuals in group g in state s in survey year t; $post_t$ is an indicator variable for $t > 2013$; M_g is an indicator variable for group g being mixed-citizenship; S_g is an indicator variable for group g being same-sex; α_{gs} are group-state fixed effects; γ_t are survey year fixed effects; and ϵ_{gst} is an error term such that $\mathbb{E}(\epsilon_{gst}) = 0$.

- Coefficient of interest is β_4: the incidence ratio $\exp(\beta_4)$ estimates the relative increase in mixed-citizenship same-sex couples after 2013, relative to other couples.

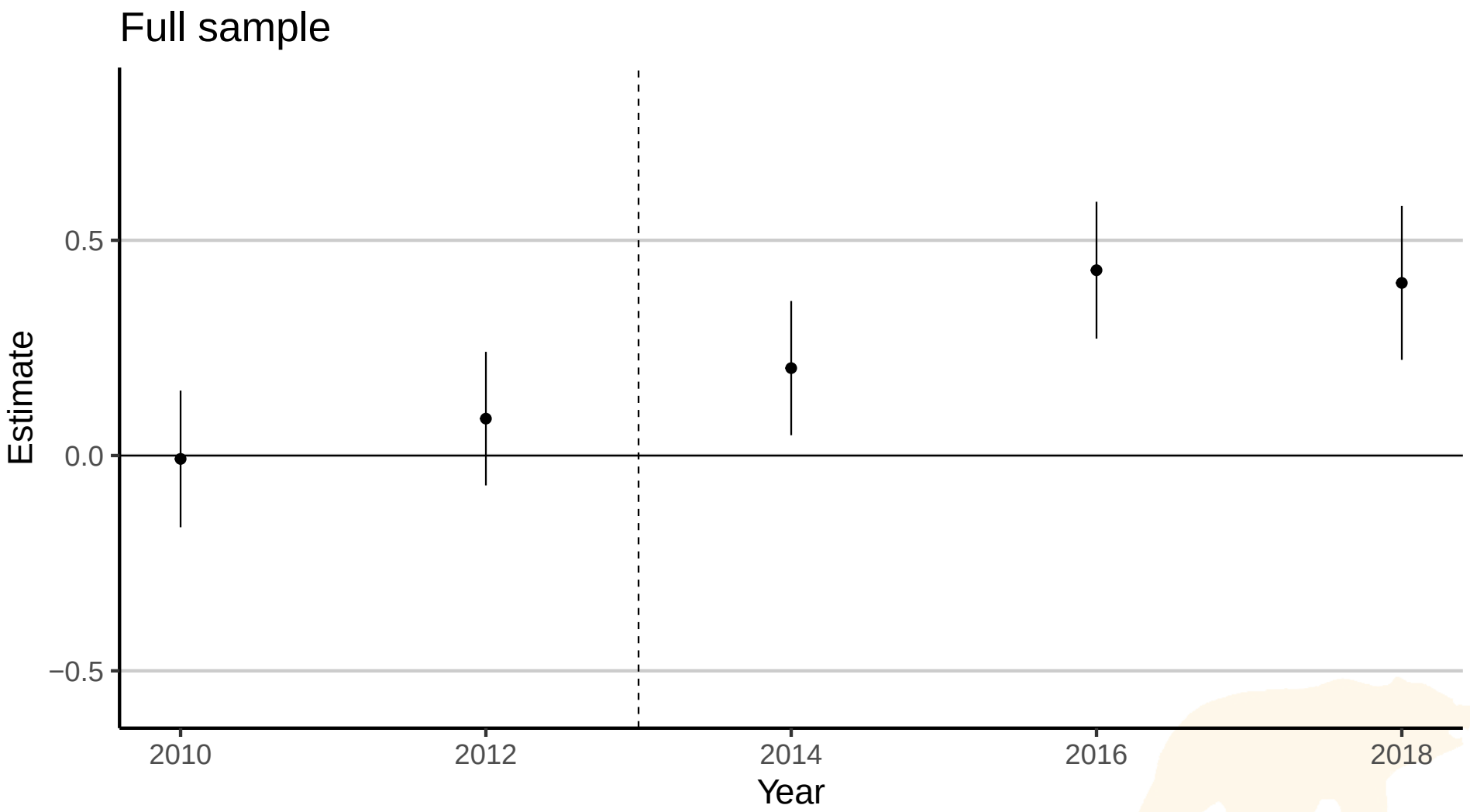
Results

Results

Main Effects



Dynamic Models



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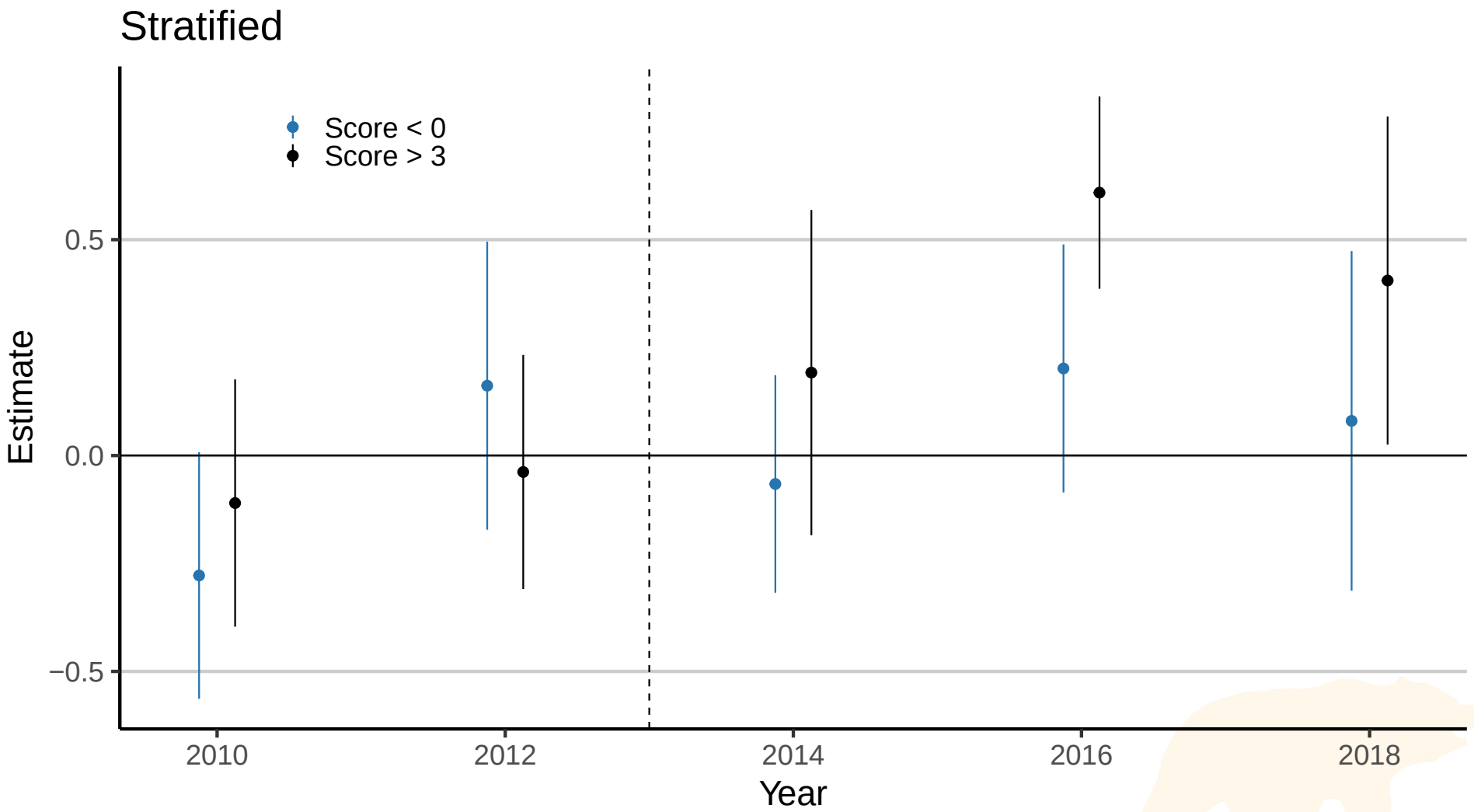
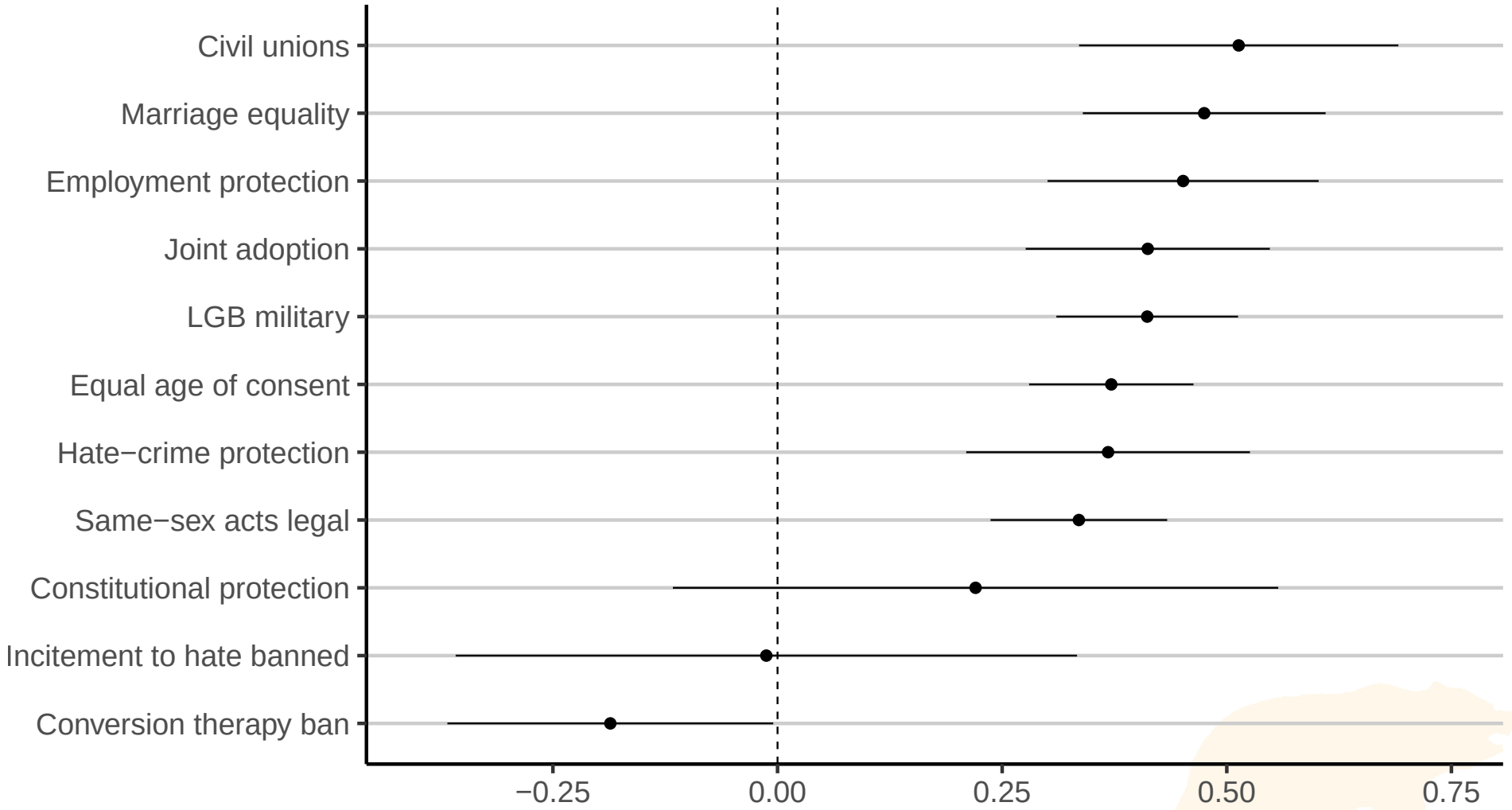
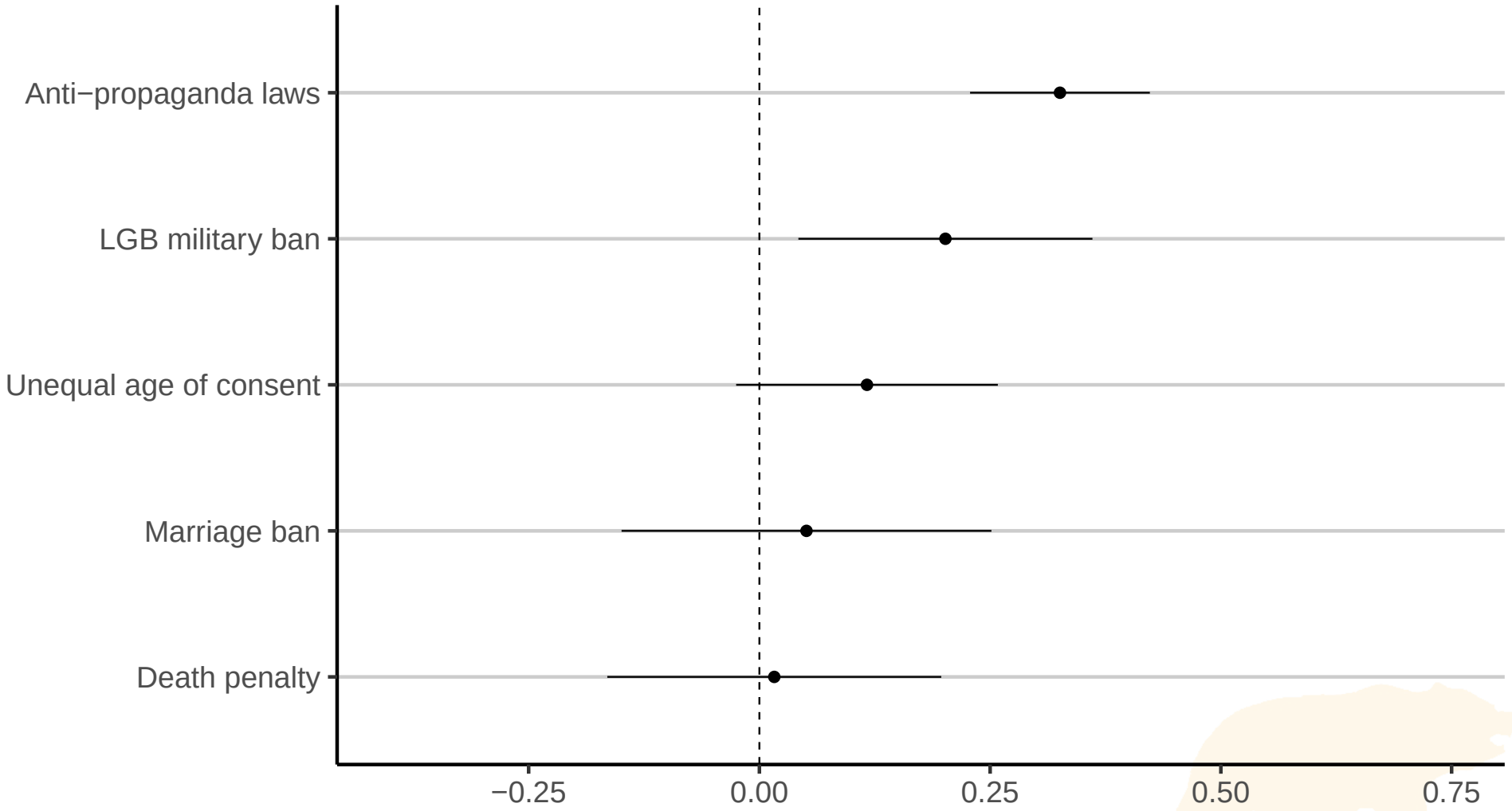


Specific Policies



Specific Policies: Progressive



Discussion

Next steps

- Adjust for possible state- and group-level confounders
- Stratify by state LGB policy environment
- Incorporate 2020 data

End

Thank You

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