

'A True Friend With Six Hearts'

Using Firearms to Cope with Psychological Threat

Nick Buttrick

University of Virginia

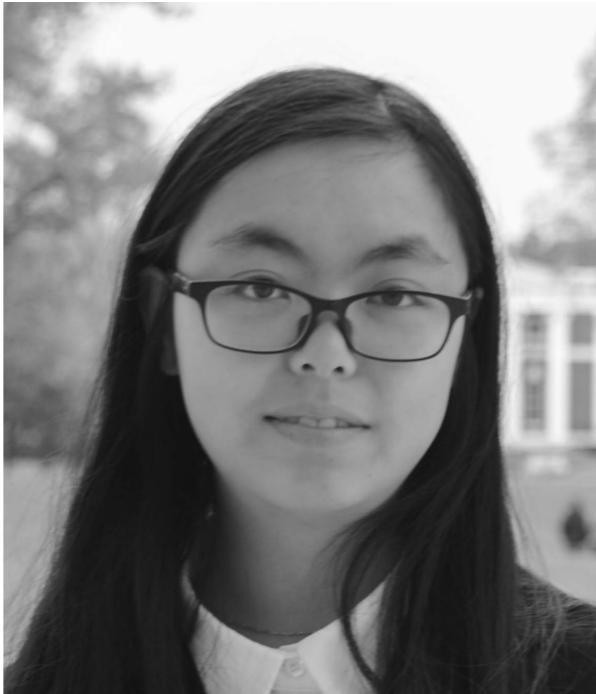


***New Directions
in the Social
Psychology
of Firearms***





Sara Medina-
DeVilliers



Wendy Wang



Tim Wilson



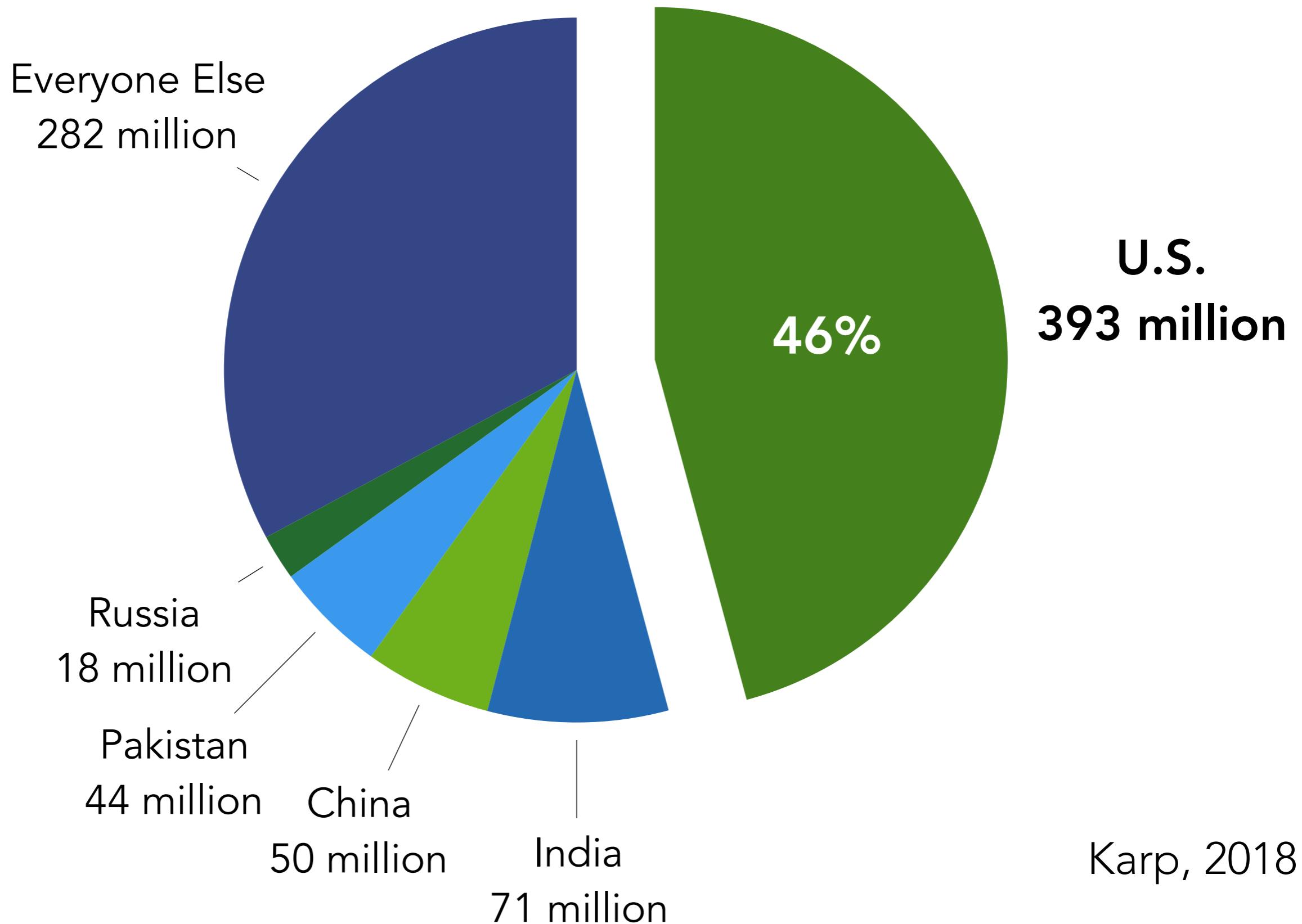
Jim Coan

Ana Rabogliatti
Brian Henriquez
Kincaid Youman
Campbell Edwards
Alex Hendel
Jun Seok Bae
Caroline Luscko
Elyse Morris
Graham Gilliam
Jerome Romualdez
Sam Nall
Emily Woodworth
Mathieu Fondin

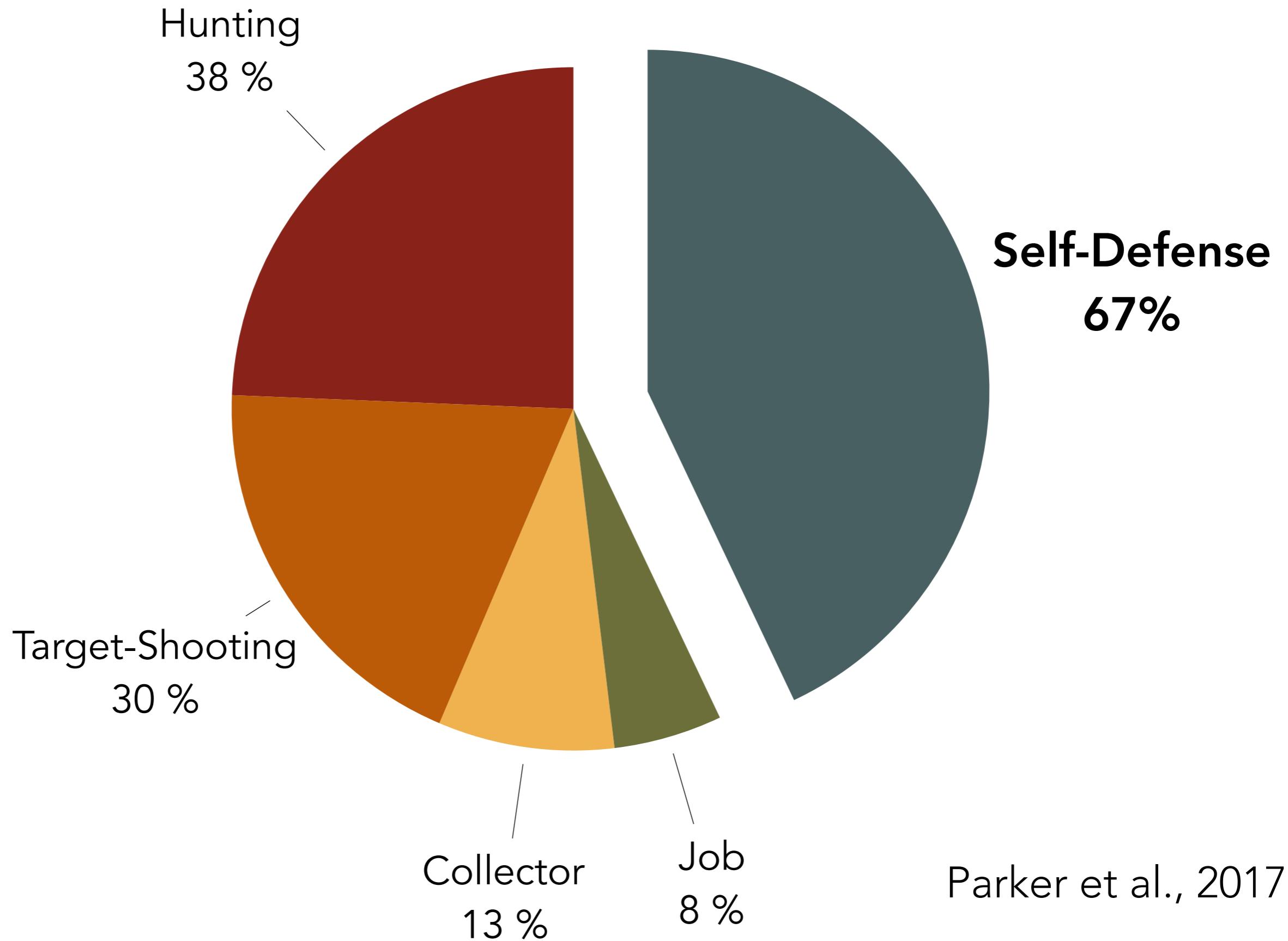


 UVA ARTS & SCIENCES
SOCIETY OF FELLOWS

Civilian-Owned Guns, Worldwide



Why Own a Gun?



Guns are Dangerous

- A gun in the house doubles the likelihood that a household member will be murdered violently, and triples the likelihood of death by suicide. Anglemyer et al., 2014
- Increase in guns, increase in gun-related casualties; decrease in guns, decrease in gun-related casualties Jena & Olenski, 2018; Levine & McKnight, 2017
- Guns are used in self-defense in fewer than 1% of reported crimes Hemenway & Solnick, 2015; Planty & Truman, 2013
- In 'active shooter' situations, police recommend that people carrying firearms stay holstered Blair, Nichols, Burns, & Curnutt, 2013

State Gazette.

VOL. XI.

SEAT OF GOVERNMENT, AUSTIN, TEXAS, SATURDAY, MAY 5, 1860.

✓ NO. 39.

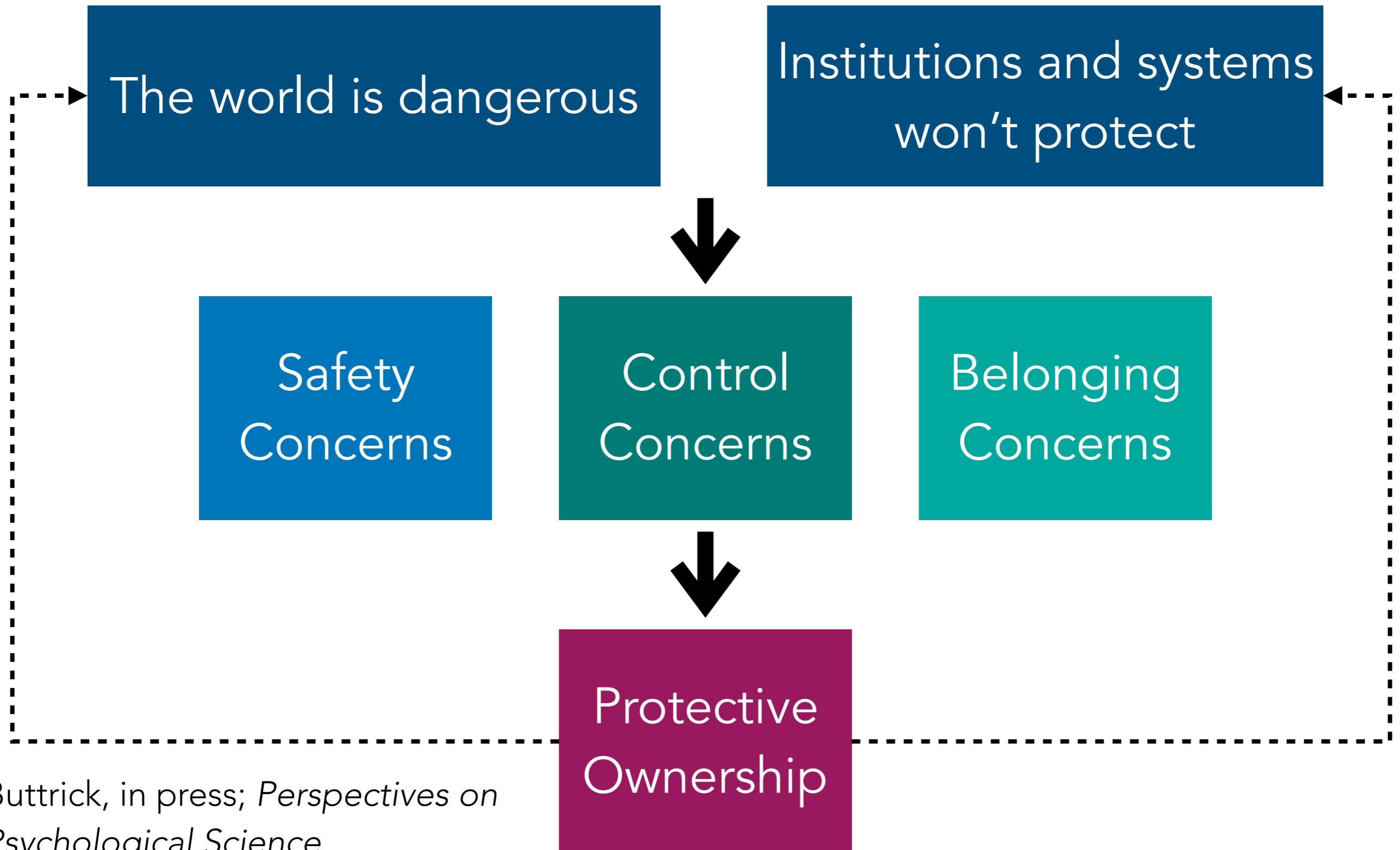
**COLT'S
PATENT FIRE ARMS**
Manufacturing Company.
Col. Sam. Colt, President.

PISTOLS, RIFLES, CARBINES AND SHOT GUNS.
Great Reduction In Prices!
Simple Reasons for Preferring Colt's
Arms to all others.

10. If you buy a Colt's rifle or pistol, you feel certain that you have one true friend, with six hearts in his body, and can always be relied on.

10. If you buy a Colt's rifle or pistol, you feel certain that you have one true friend, with six hearts in his body, and can always be relied on.

The Coping Model of Protective Gun Ownership



A Paradigm



Coan, Schaefer, & Davidson, 2006

CAVEAT!

$n = 43$

20 non-gun-owning; 23
gun-owning

Forces a simpler random
effects-structure

Data-cleaning is still
ongoing...

Non-Gun Owners

More Calm

800

790

780

770

760

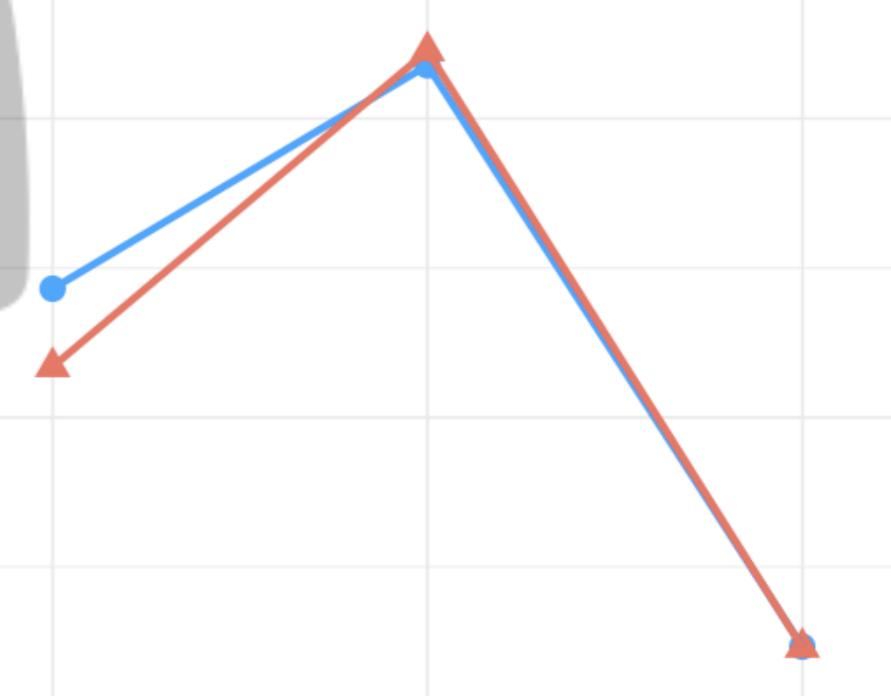
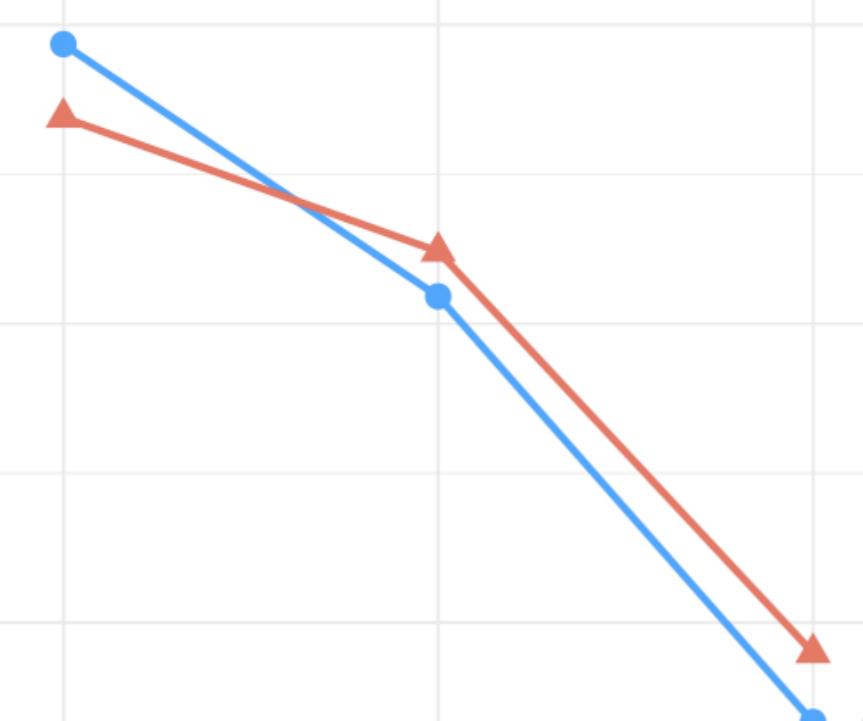
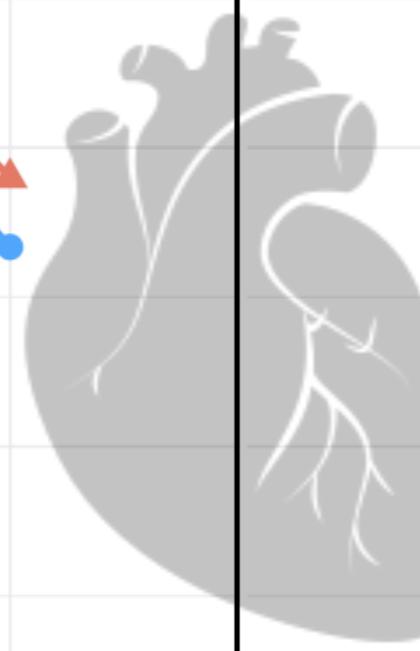
750

More Stressed



Gun Owners

Safety
Threat



Non-Gun Owners

More Calm

800

*

Inter-Beat Interval

780

ns

ns

770

Condition x Threat $p = .01$

760

750



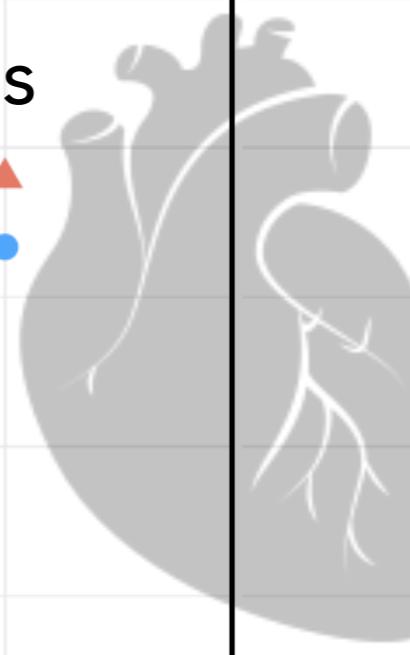
Gun Owners

Safety
Threat

More Stressed

ns

*



Non-Gun Owners

More Calm

800

790

780

770

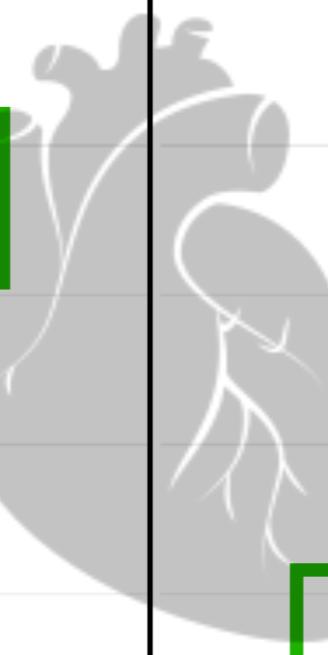
760

750

Inter-Beat Interval

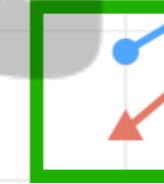






Gun Owners

Safety
Threat





Non-Gun Owners

Gun Owners

More Calm

Inter-Beat Interval

More Stressed

800

790

780

770

760

750



800

790

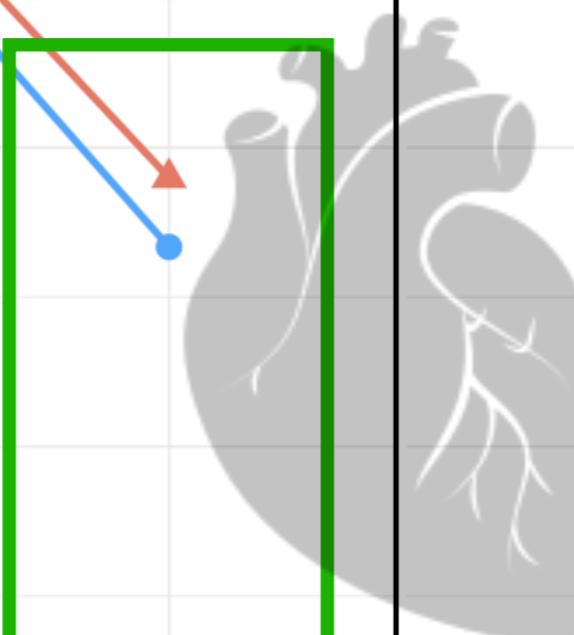
780

770

760

750

Safety
Threat

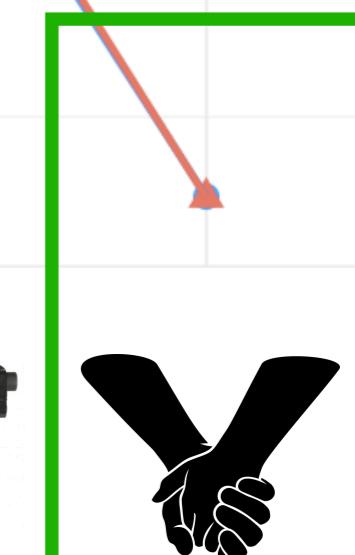


760

770

780

790



Non-Gun Owners

More Calm

800

Inter-Beat Interval

790

Closeness to Friend

780

770

760

Less Close More Close

750



Gun Owners

More Stressed

800

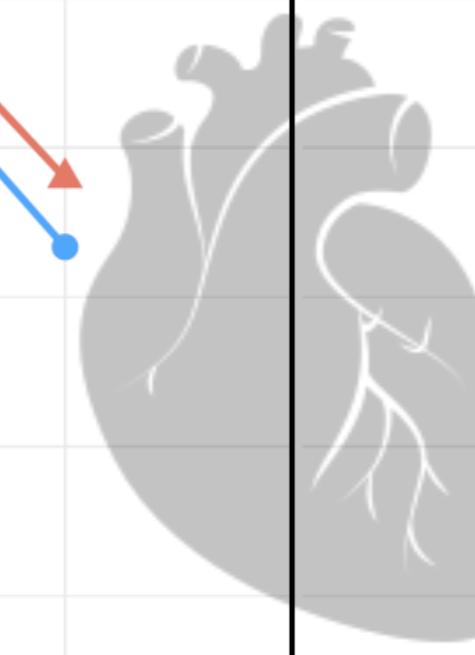
790

780

770

760

750



770

760

750



Safety
Threat

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

780

770

760

750

800

790

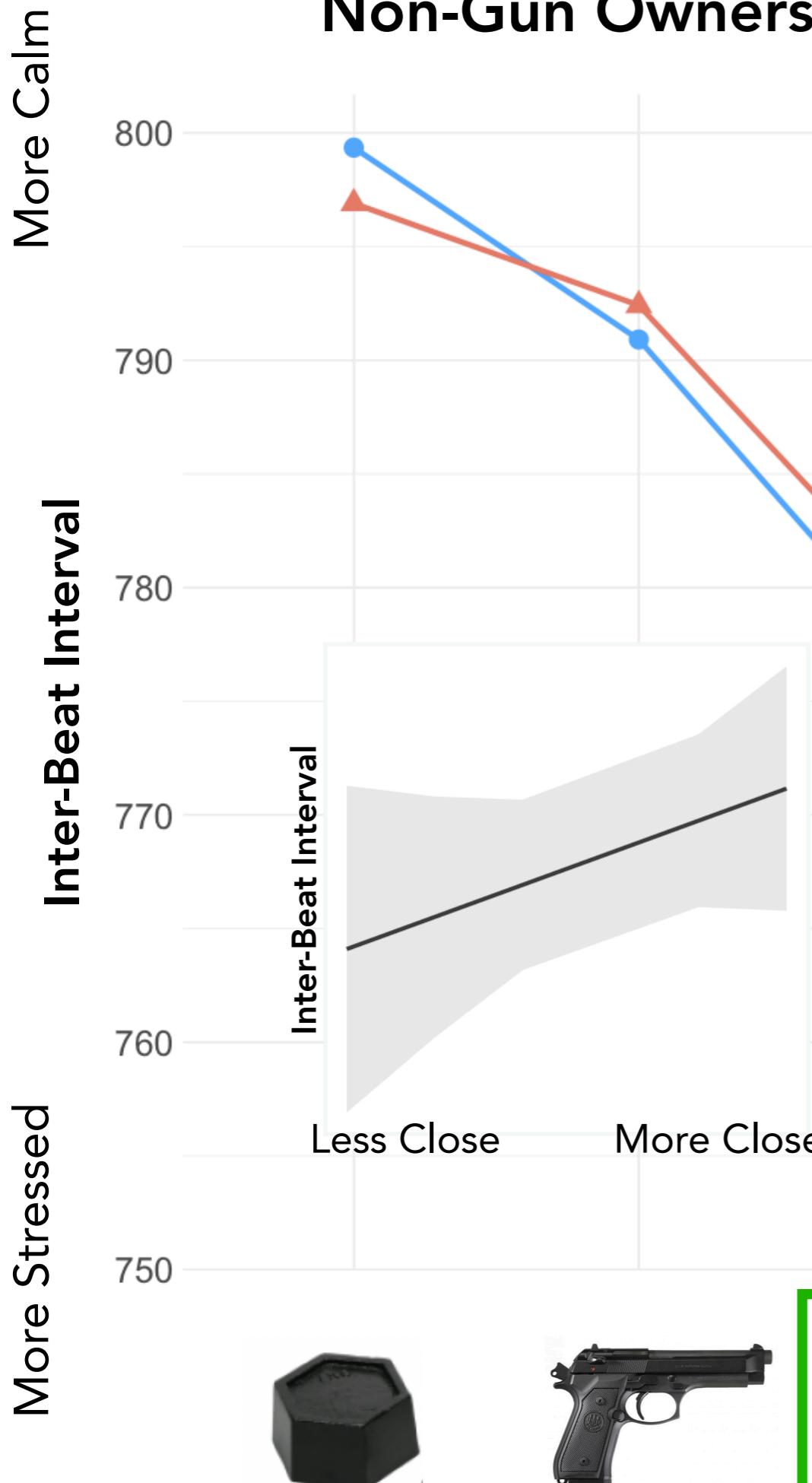
780

770

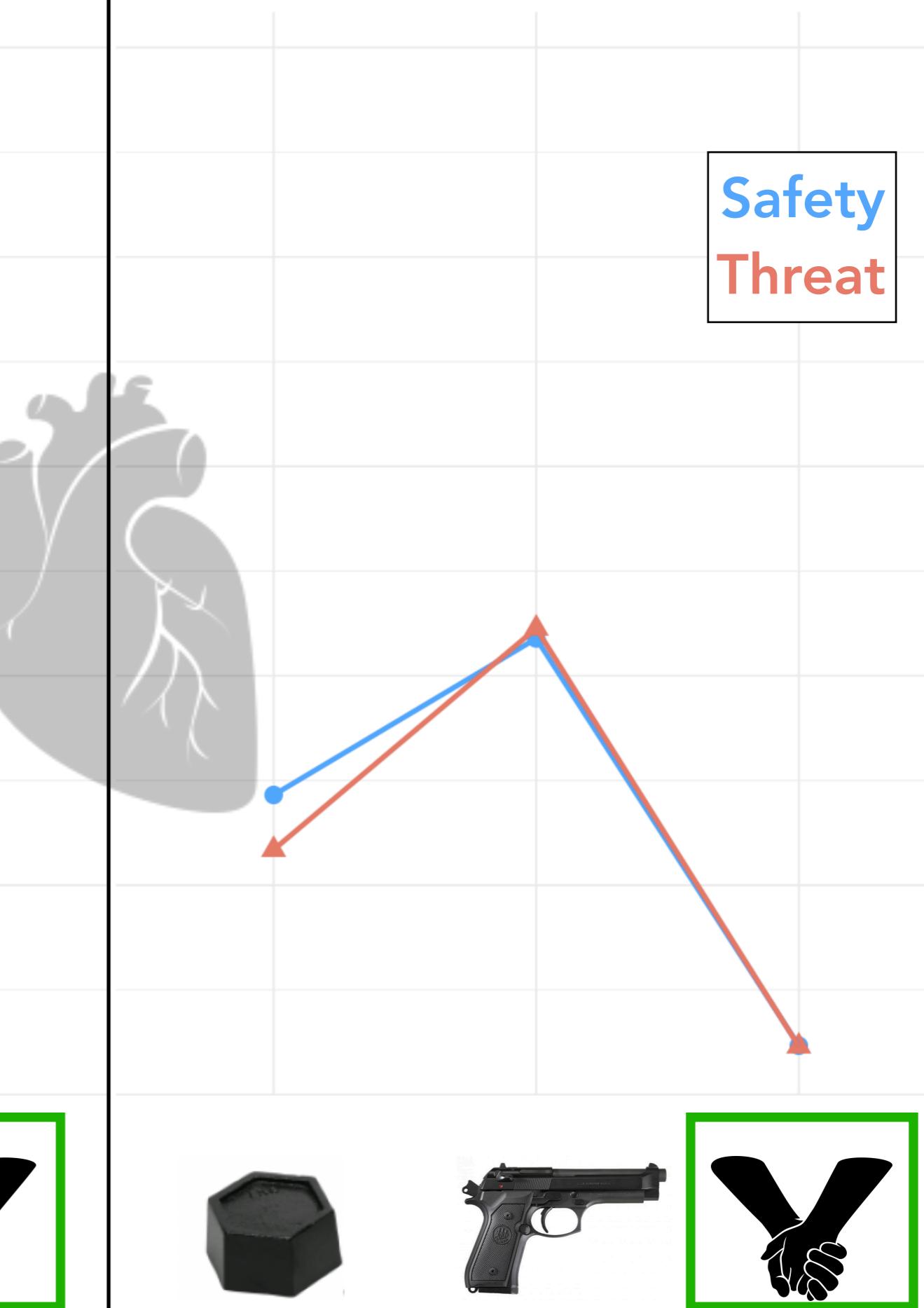
760

750

Non-Gun Owners



Gun Owners



Safety
Threat

Non-Gun Owners

More Calm

800

790

780

770

760

750

Inter-Beat Interval

Condition x Gun Ownership
 $p < .001$



Gun Owners

Safety
Threat

800

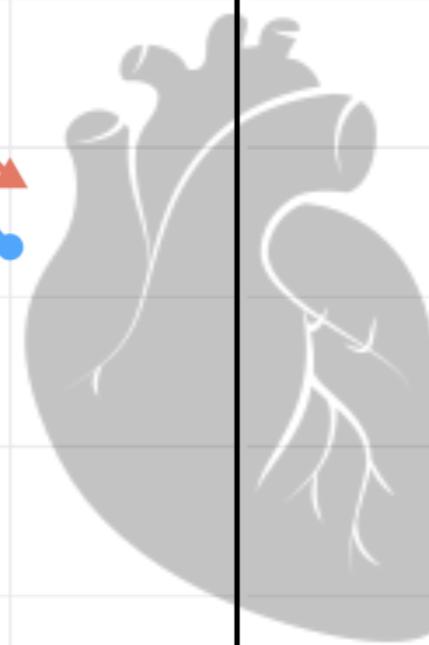
790

780

770

760

750



Non-Gun Owners

More Calm

800

790

780

770

760

750

Inter-Beat Interval



Gun Owners

Safety
Threat

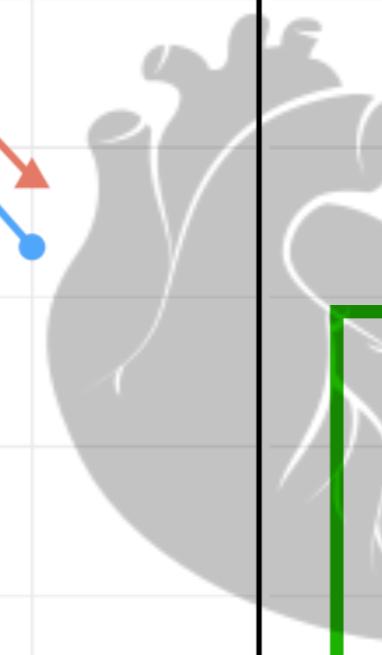
800

790

770

760

750



Worst Imaginable

Non-Gun Owners

9
7

$n = 90$

36 non-gun; 54 gun

Pain

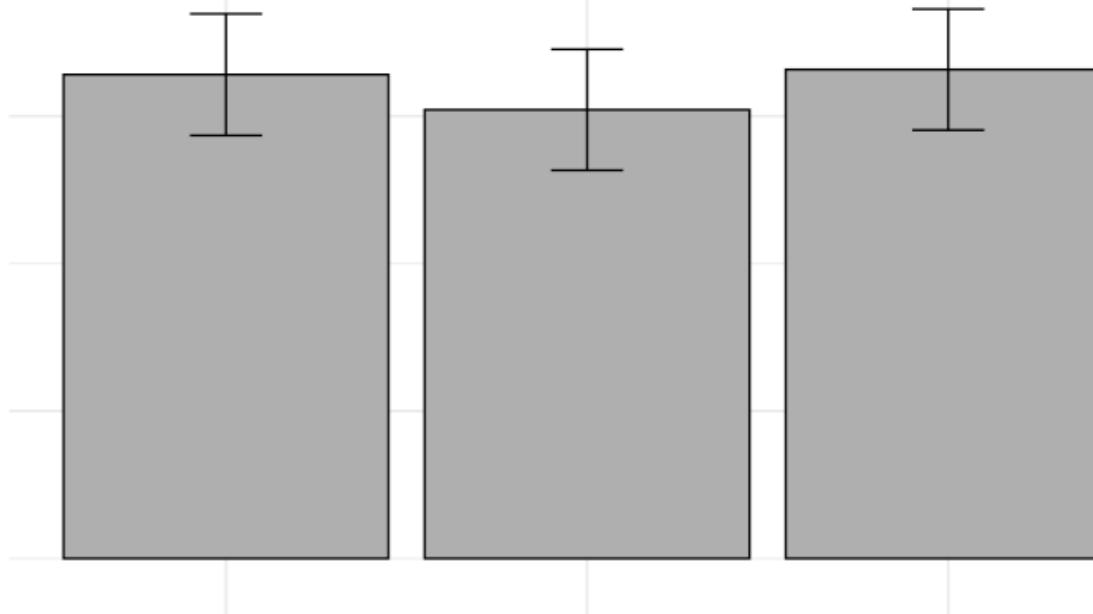
No Pain



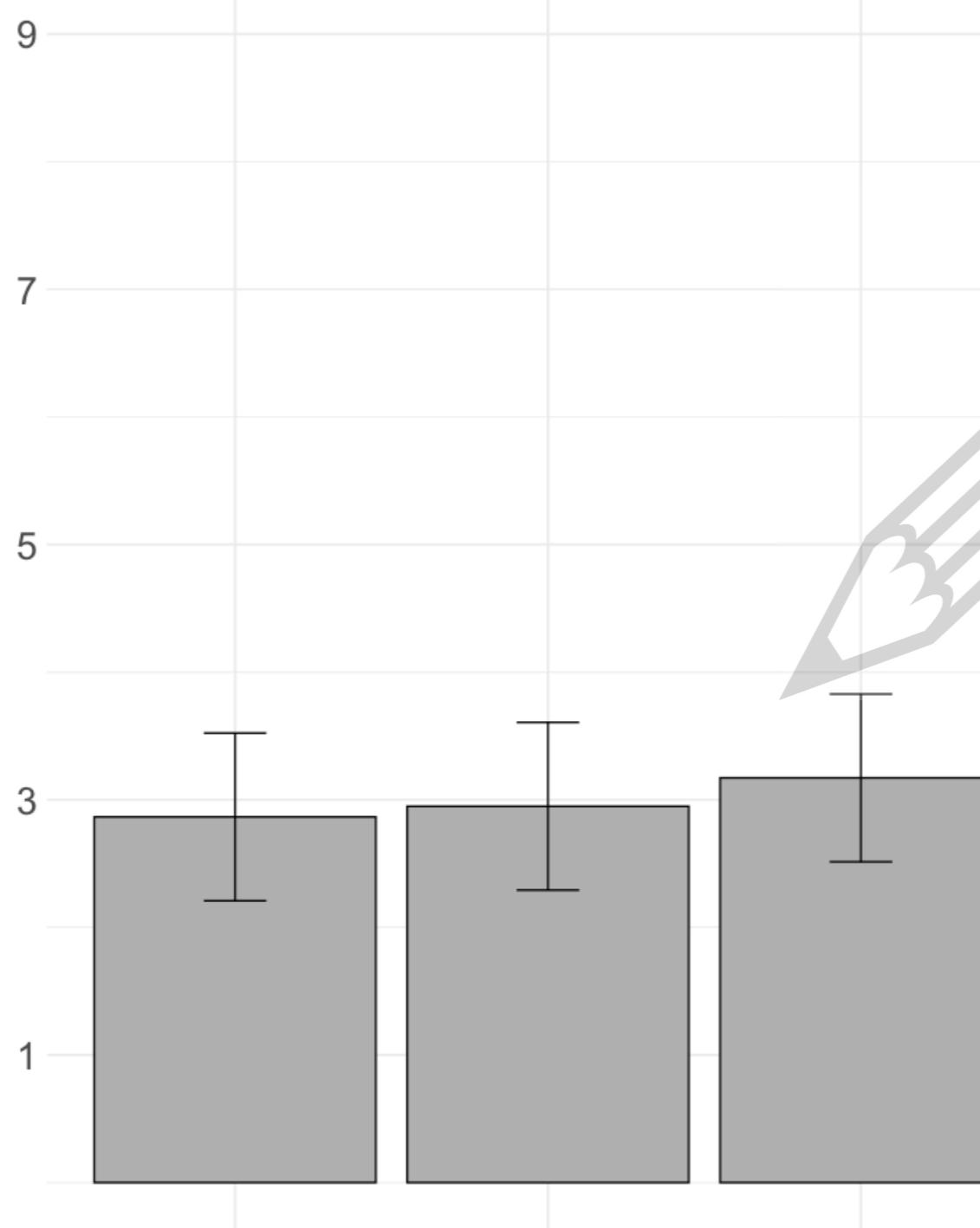
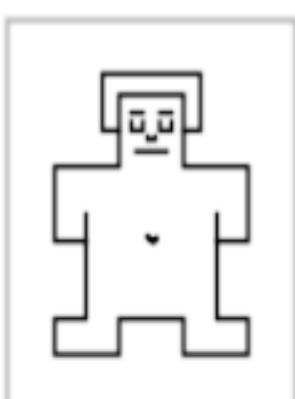
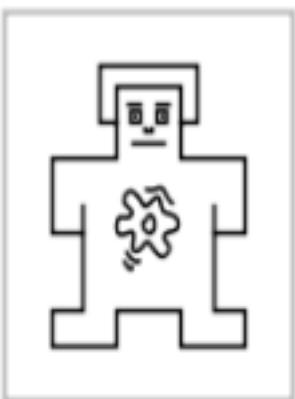
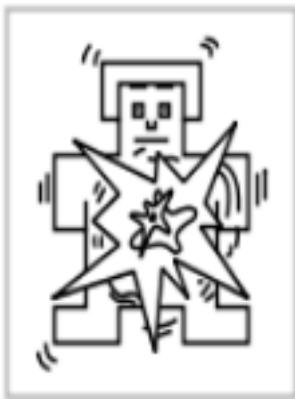
Gun Owners

Main Effect of Gun Ownership

$p = .006$

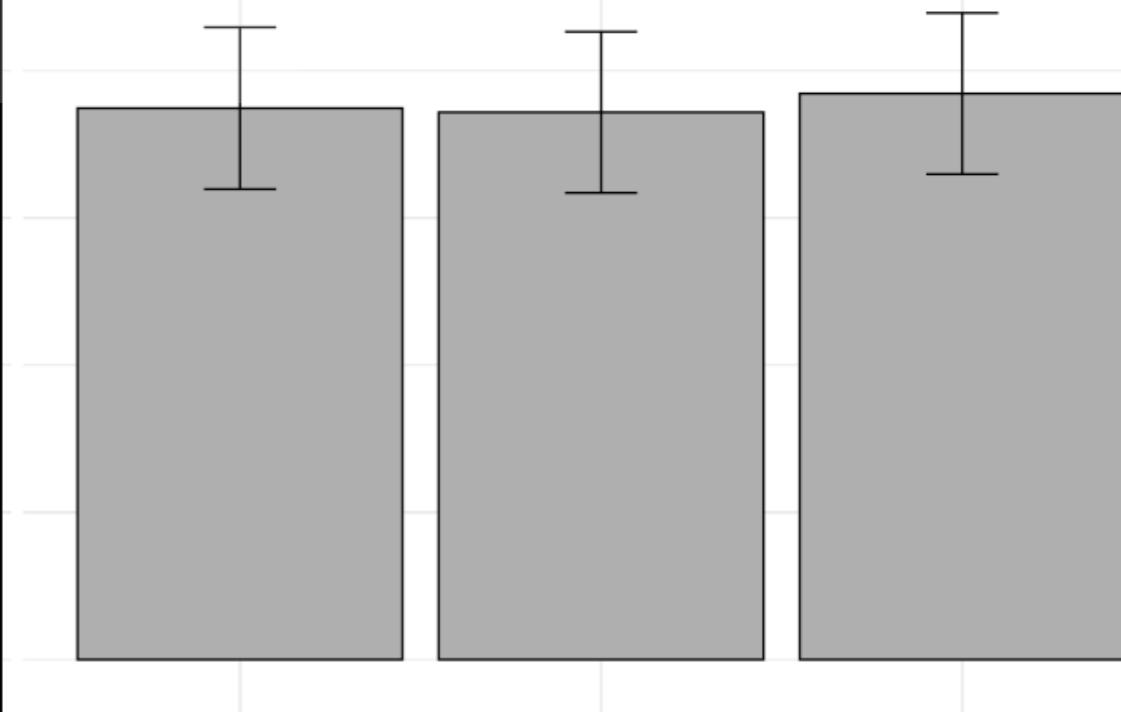


Non-Gun Owners



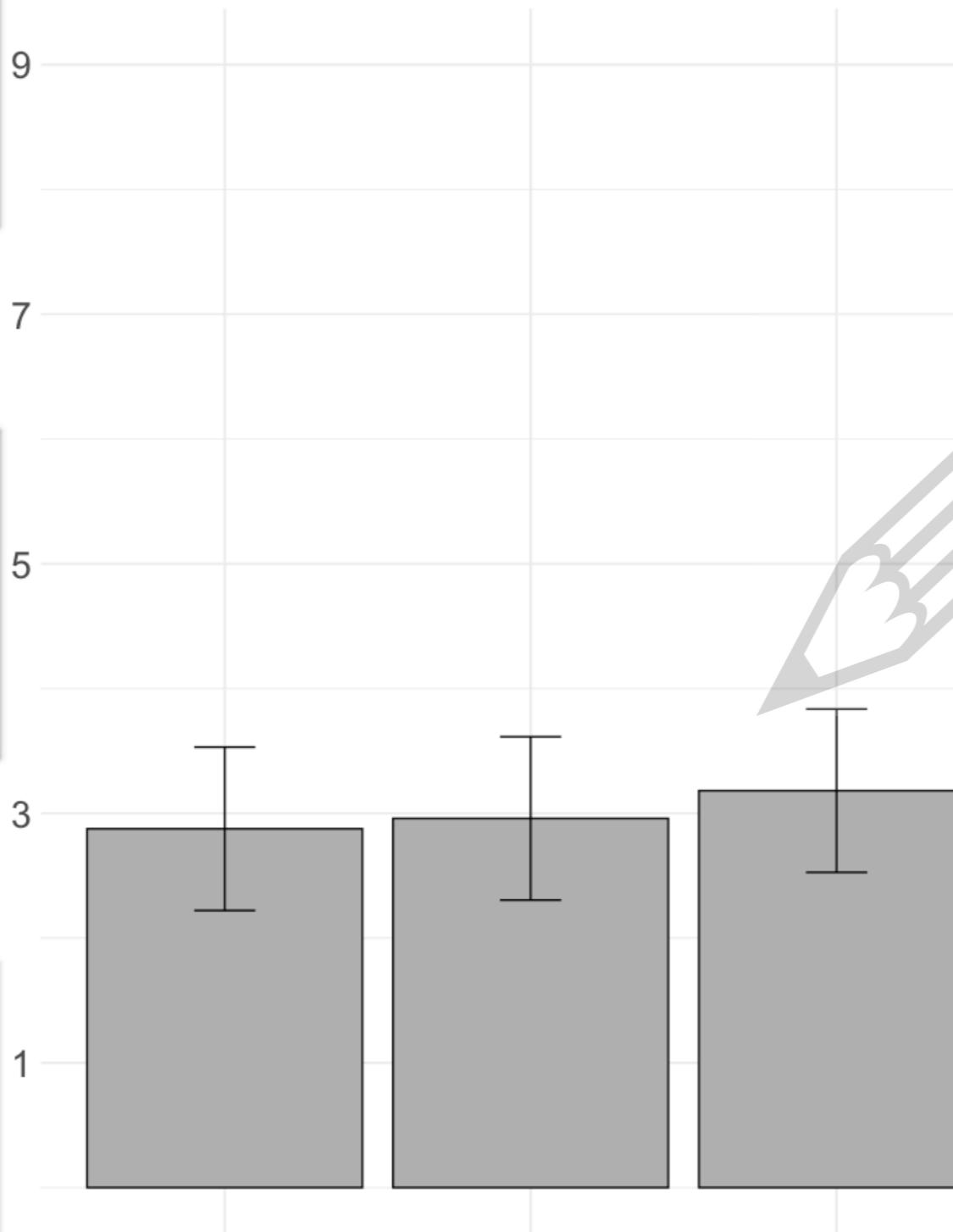
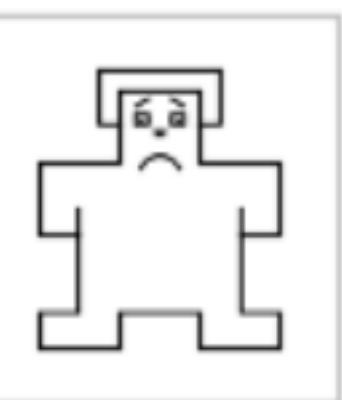
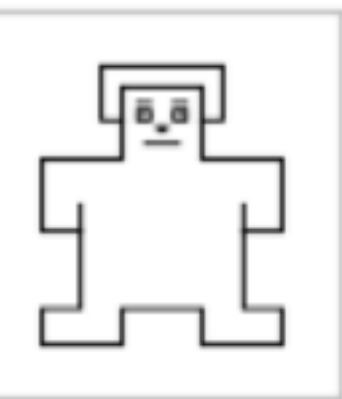
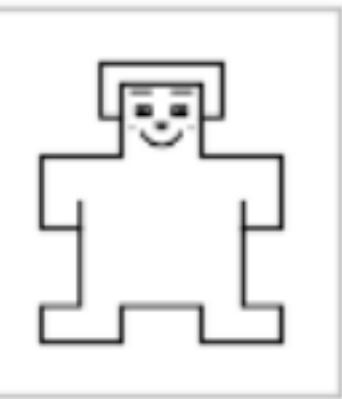
Gun Owners

Main Effect of Gun Ownership
 $p = .034$

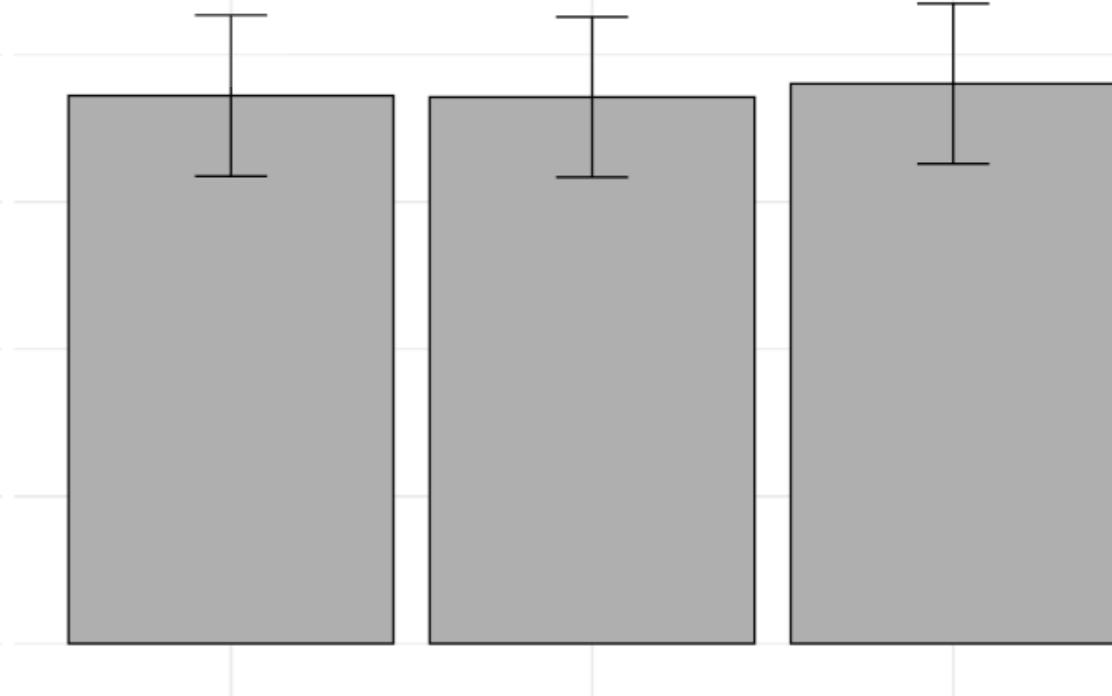


Non-Gun Owners

Gun Owners



Main Effect of Gun Ownership
 $p = .043$



A Recap

- Participants from **gun-owning** households felt **less threatened when holding a gun** than when holding a metal weight
- Participants from **non-gun-owning** households, by contrast, felt **more threatened when holding a gun** than when holding a metal weight

Ongoing Projects

Using **big-data** to link threats to fundamental needs with gun sales, and tracing the history of the cultural complex to the antebellum South



Jes Mazen

Examining the **lived experience** of gun ownership, especially the bidirectional relationship between vigilance and gun-carrying behavior



Samantha
Heintzelman

“Since a ‘sense of security’ is inherently a psychological trait, it does no good to argue that the sense of security afforded by owning a gun is ‘just an illusion.’” Wright, 1995, p. 65

