

NSSF® REPORT 2018

REACTIVATING NON-SHOOTING/LAPSED FIREARMS OWNERS



Responsive Management



Prepared for NSSF by
Responsive Management
Harrisonburg, VA



THE FIREARMS INDUSTRY TRADE ASSOCIATION

| NSSF.ORG



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REACTIVATING NON-SHOOTING / LAPSED FIREARM OWNERS

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1. INTRODUCTION

This project was conducted for the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) to study firearm owners who are infrequent or inactive shooters, as well as others in households with firearms who do not go shooting. The study was conducted to support efforts to encourage more shooting participation among those in firearm households who are not currently shooting. The report looks at people's motivations for sport shooting, their opinions on and attitudes toward sport shooting, their constraints to participating, and their reactions to efforts to encourage participation.

The study was prompted by the fact that nearly twice as many Americans live in a household with a firearm than go shooting—in other words, there are millions of people who live in households with firearms, or even own the firearms themselves, yet do not go shooting. This represents a crucial reactivation opportunity that could theoretically double the size of the active target and sport shooting population.

The study entailed focus groups of people who live in households with firearms but do not actively shoot. The study also included scientific surveys of the general public and of people (both shooters and non-shooters) in households with firearms.

Specifically, the study examined those who live in households with firearms and compared them to those who live in households without a firearm. The study also examines various groups categorized by whether they shot within the past 5 years or whether they ever shot, as shown in the matrix in Table 1.1. For the purposes of this study, hunting with a firearm was included within shooting.

Table 1.1. Categorization of the General Public by Sport Shooting Participation and Presence of a Firearm in the Household

	Shot with or hunted with a firearm in the past 5 years	Shot with or hunted with a firearm ever, but neither in the past 5 years	Never shot or hunted with a firearm
Firearm household	Active shooter in a firearm household	Inactive shooter in a firearm household	Non-participant in a firearm household
Non-firearm household	Active shooter in a non-firearm household	Inactive shooter in a non-firearm household	Non-participant in a non-firearm household

Other variables that were considered included whether the shooter owned a firearm or not, as well as the frequency that active shooters went shooting within the previous 5 years.

To account for the variables described on the previous page, the following terminology is used in this report to describe various groups.

- **Firearm household** refers to a household in which there is a firearm.
- **Non-firearm household** refers to a household without a firearm.
- **Active shooter** refers to a shooter who has shot (or hunted) within the previous 5 years. Note that active shooters may also be broken down by their frequency of shooting:
 - **Avid active shooter** refers to a shooter who annually shoots 3 times or more.
 - **Infrequent active shooter** refers to a shooter who annually shoots less than 3 times.
- **Inactive shooter** refers to a person who has shot (or hunted) at some time in his/her lifetime but not within the previous 5 years.
- **Non-participant** refers to a person who has never shot (or hunted) in his/her lifetime.
- **Firearm owner** refers to a person who is the actual owner of the firearm in the firearm household.
- **Non-owner in a firearm household** refers specifically to a person in a firearm household who is not an actual owner of a firearm.
- **Non-firearm household member** will be the term to refer to these people who do not live in a household with a firearm and, therefore, also do not own a firearm.

This report starts with the implications of the findings from the research. It then contains a section on the qualitative data analysis (i.e., the focus groups) and a section on the quantitative data analysis (i.e., the telephone and online surveys) that were used to support the implications section. The report then has a section that explains the methods used to gather the data.

2. IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

The following points are taken from the research that was conducted for this project. This chapter shows only the salient findings; the data that back up these findings are detailed in Chapters 3 and 4.

MARKET SIZE AND ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

- **Inactive and non-participant firearms owners represent a major untapped market.** Responsive Management estimates that 45% of adult United States residents live in a household with a firearm, research that closely matches other reliable sources (for instance, both Gallup and the Pew Research Center put that percentage at 42%). The overall population of households containing firearms includes active shooters (those who shot in the past 5 years), inactive shooters (those who did not shoot in the past 5 years but shot previous to that), and non-participants (those who never shot). Separate from this population is a further group of interest: U.S. residents who are active shooters but who live in a *non-firearm* household. These latter three groups represent substantial numbers of Americans who could perhaps be persuaded to participate (or participate more) in sport shooting.
- **While estimates vary to some degree, the American sport shooting population is sizable—however, there is room to grow.** Responsive Management’s latest survey for NSSF found that 49.4 million adults participated in any type of target or sport shooting in 2016. Meanwhile, a 2017 estimate from the Pew Research Center put the number closer to 45 million, while the latest surveys conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service / U.S. Census Bureau and the National Sporting Goods Association found 32 million and 19 million sport shooters nationwide, respectively.
- **There is reason to expect that Americans’ firearm ownership and sport shooting participation are both underreported to some degree.** At least a certain number of firearms owners and active sport shooters may be reluctant to confirm their firearm ownership and/or sport shooting participation to pollsters whom they do not trust; this distrust may be greatest toward surveyors who identify themselves as working on behalf of the federal government or an entity or organization with little name recognition. Pollsters’ public statements on firearms issues may also impede their ability to collect accurate data: for example, in discussing findings from the General Social Science Survey (the 2014 iteration of which found that just 32% of U.S. households had a firearm), Survey Director Tom Smith noted that a drop in gun ownership would “make it easier for politicians to do the right thing on guns.” Meanwhile, a 2015 Zogby Analytics survey question posed the following to respondents: “If a national pollster asked you if you owned a firearm, would you determine to tell him or her the truth or would you feel it was none of their business?” On this question, 35% of current firearms owners said it was none of the pollster’s business.
- **Regardless of any underreporting, successfully recruiting inactive and non-participant firearms owners into regular shooting activities would yield a major economic windfall for the industry.** About 25 million people live in a household with a firearm but have not shot in the past 5 years. Given an estimate by Southwick Associates that the average sport shooter spends \$493 annually on shooting equipment and activities, the total market value of this population is slightly more than \$12 billion. Successfully recruiting just 3% of these potential shooters would generate around \$360 million in spending.

COMPARISON OF FIREARM AND NON-FIREARM HOUSEHOLDS

- Those living in firearm households, compared to their non-firearm counterparts, are more likely to be white, male, in the older age groups, to be from the South or Midwest Regions, and to be living in a rural area. Education differences are not as notable between firearm households and non-firearm households.
- Active shooters in *non-firearm* households tend to be relatively evenly split on gender, younger (they are particularly *not* in the oldest age group), and *not* overwhelmingly white. They also tend to be more educated, more urban, and split on whether they grew up with a firearm or not. While not the main focus of this project because they are considered already active, they are included here both to contrast with the other groups and because they still represent a group that could be encouraged to be more avid by becoming firearm owners.

COMPOSITION OF INACTIVE SHOOTERS WHO OWN FIREARMS

- When inactive shooters *who actually own a firearm* are examined, they are found to be male, middle aged, suburban or urban, and without children in their households. The majority are white.
- Within the group of inactive shooters who own firearms, there is a division, with a substantial percentage of them being relatively new firearm owners (i.e., having owned for no more than 5 years) and another similarly sized group being long-term owners (25 years or longer). This suggests that the industry must consider both segments of this group—new owners and long-term owners.

COMPOSITION OF NON-PARTICIPANTS WHO OWN FIREARMS

- Non-participants in this context means that these people have never shot a firearm, yet own one. A substantial proportion of this group received their firearms through gifts or inheritance, but some actually purchased a firearm and then never shot it. Typical firearm owners who are non-participants are male, younger, white, and urban or suburban; they are about evenly split between those with and those without children in their household. As will be discussed further on, this group is in need of basic information about how to go about participating in shooting—including where to shoot and simply how to safely transport, handle, load, and shoot a firearm. They also can be encouraged to shoot (again, as will be discussed later) through messages that stress the need for self-defense practice and the need for firearms to be both shot and cleaned periodically.

FINDINGS REGARDING WAYS TO ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION

- The importance of owning a firearm was rated highly by all groups, even the inactive shooters and non-participants. This strong feeling about owning a firearm can be used in encouraging participation. A message might emphasize that, in addition to owning a firearm, it is important to practice with it as well.
- There is a need for more information to be disseminated to potential shooters about the very basics of how to go about shooting. An important constraint to shooting participation is the lack of awareness of where to go, how to safely and legally transport a firearm in a vehicle, and how to clean and maintain a firearm. There is also a desire for reputable information sources on these topics.

- **Ways to encourage participation that resonated well among less avid shooters and non-participants included self-defense practice, firearm rights, and safety education—not for the challenge and certainly not for hunting.** Trying to get these adult non-shooters and less-than-avid shooters to shoot more through hunting is nearly useless. Getting non-hunting adults to hunt is an uphill climb, but getting them to shoot outside of the realm of hunting is more realistic.
- **Interest in shooting in general is low among inactive shooters, relative to interest among active shooters, so overcoming this low interest is important—really lack of interest is the main “constraint” to participation rather than more tangible constraints.** Stressing the need for occasional practice, if the firearm is to be used for self-defense, and the necessity that firearms be shot and maintained periodically could be one way to increase interest.
- **Where there is interest, it is highest among the less avid groups in shooting a handgun rather than with shooting other types of firearms.** Additionally, handguns are, by far, the most commonly owned firearms among the less avid groups. Encouraging handgun shooting would, therefore, appear to be more efficacious in increasing participation than encouraging rifle and shotgun shooting.
- **The research suggests that people are likely to go shooting if asked by a friend or family member.** Frequently noted in the focus groups, this scenario actually addresses multiple constraints: a knowledgeable friend or family member will know where to go shooting, will know how to comply with laws and regulations, and can mentor the novice shooter without intimidation or judgment.

FINDINGS REGARDING CONSTRAINTS TO PARTICIPATION

- **Lack of interest is a more important constraint to shooting participation than is cost.** Inactive shooters who own firearms have some of the lowest ratings (compared to the other groups) of the importance of the various constraints. They are much like non-owners who are not active shooters, and one could conjecture that a simple lack of interest would mean that the other constraints are, therefore, not as important. Additionally, costs are more of an issue for those who are actually participating rather than for the inactive shooters (in other words, costs are not the top reason that inactive shooters are not active).
- **Some potential shooters are deterred from participating because they lack confidence—in part an outgrowth of their lack of knowledge—and feel that they may be critiqued by others.** The representative comments below from focus group participants help to illustrate the mindset behind this constraint:

“I don’t want to be the guy not knowing what he’s doing in front of everyone.”

“I would feel stupid if I went in there. I’m a guy...they’re just going to look at me, like, ‘Nobody ever showed you how to put bullets in a gun and shoot?’”

“When my male friends are talking about it at a much higher level...that intimidates me.”

- **The above point is related to this one: the industry is not seen (by some) to be welcoming, and staff at ranges are often perceived to be impatient or dismissive when asked basic questions.** In line with the finding regarding the effect of a lack of confidence, the research suggests that some men feel that they will be disparaged if they reveal that they do not know basic information about how to load, shoot, and maintain a firearm.
- **Some women indicated that they would like to see more women working at shooting ranges.** It is useful to keep in mind that people tend to buy things that look like themselves (or, in this case, frequent places staffed by people who look like themselves). The following comment from a female focus group participant speaks to the importance of ensuring that shooting ranges not be dominated by male employees: *“Get some girls working there. It’s always guys working at the range.”*
- **Although some potential shooters in this research wanted accommodations for their children at ranges, it nonetheless appears that having children is not a huge constraint.** Indeed, having children in the household, which some conjectured might negatively affect participation, does not appear to be as important a constraint as was thought by some: of all the groups, avid active shooters had the highest rate of children living in their household.

OTHER FINDINGS OF NOTE

- **Avid active shooters have markedly higher rates of firearm purchase than do other groups.** While this is not an earth-shattering finding, it is nonetheless interesting to see **how much higher their purchase rate is (72%) compared to less avid groups (no more than 60%), as well as how much lower is their rate of inheriting/being gifted *all* of their firearms (27%) compared to the less avid groups (38% or higher).** This suggests that there is an audience that would react favorably to having opportunities to test “that old firearm that you got from your father.” This would dovetail, as well, with messages emphasizing the need for people to practice once in a while if they are depending on the firearm for self-defense, as well as the need to take firearms out and shoot them and clean them periodically to keep them maintained. Perhaps a similar message might be to encourage people to “keep that old firearm you got from your father properly maintained.”
- **Avid active shooters expressed a relatively high concern about safety. Because these avid shooters are, presumably, comfortable with their own knowledge and ability, one could conjecture that they are concerned with other shooters’ lack of ability and ignorance of safety precautions. Safety concerns, on the other hand, were not an important constraint among inactive shooters who own a firearm.** Both groups of active shooters have the highest ratings of safety concern, but then the next highest ratings of safety concern come from non-participants. One could conjecture that the latter’s safety concerns come from lack of knowledge about firearms. However, active shooters’ safety concerns could perhaps be from people having to shoot around other people whom they do not deem particularly careful. This conjecture is supported by the fact that avid active shooters had the highest mean ratings of importance for the statement, “You don’t like the kind of people who are shooting when you go to the range.”

These are the salient findings from the research. Nonetheless, the detailed findings in the next two chapters include many findings (and nuances of findings) that can help ensure that reactivation efforts are as efficacious as possible.

3. FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

This chapter looks at the qualitative findings from the focus groups of inactive shooters who were firearm owners as well as inactive shooters who were non-owners in a firearm household. The chapter first summarizes some of the primary issues that emerged. It then takes a closer look at all of the qualitative research conducted for this project.

SUMMARY OF THREE PRIMARY ISSUES THAT EMERGED IN THE FOCUS GROUPS

The overarching takeaway from these focus groups is that, in general, people who own or live with firearms but have not used them in recent years can be persuaded to re-engage in sport shooting participation. The focus group participants do not have a negative opinion of firearms or shooters; in fact, they became quite enthusiastic when discussing past shooting experiences and they expressed interest in a number of specific shooting activities, provided that existing constraints are satisfactorily addressed. These constraints and initial recommendations to industry on addressing them fall into the three general categories discussed below.

Need for Information

- **An overall lack of information was a major constraint for these inactive shooters, including not knowing sport shooting locations or even how to transport a firearm to a shooting location.**
 - It immediately became apparent that many people did not know where they would have access to shooting locations. Laws and regulations regarding firearm use were not well understood; in fact, some participants were reluctant to bring their guns out of the home because they were concerned that they might be illegally transporting them from the home to a range. Others expressed confusion about the legality of shooting on public lands.
- **Related to this lack of information is that many firearm owners underestimate the need to practice with firearms if one intends to use them for home protection.**
 - The focus group discussions demonstrated some possible naïveté on the part of participants who had a firearm for home protection: most underestimated the need for practice, including those who appeared to be unaware that they should practice shooting or have their firearms cleaned and maintained more often than every few years.
- **Many of these inactive shooters did not use reputable sources for their information.**
 - The focus groups revealed that inactive shooters tend to get their information on the shooting sports through word-of-mouth rather than through major industry organizations like the NSSF. In this regard, the NSSF could be very helpful in reaching inactive sport shooters through an education or outreach campaign.

Lack of Shooter Confidence

- **Many inactive and inexperienced shooters were quite intimidated by going into shooting situations around people at a higher skill level, and it was clear that inactive shooters would be most comfortable re-engaging with other shooters at a similar skill level.**
 - Shooters do not want to be made to feel inadequate; in one illuminating comment, a participant indicated that, as a man, he would be expected to already know these things.

To that end, beginner's classes were appealing to the focus group participants. Similarly, women would be more comfortable shooting with other women, and one focus group participant noted that she would like to see female employees at shooting ranges.

Industry Not Seen as Welcoming To New Shooters

- **There is a perception among many inactive shooters that staff at shooting ranges seem impatient or dismissive when asked basic questions. As a result, these shooters are disinclined to return.**
 - Focus group participants were strongly in favor of on-site assistance, which would go a long way toward making inexperienced shooters feel welcome, but the assistance given cannot actively turn them off of sport shooting.
 - In particular in the focus groups, African-American and Hispanic inactive shooters felt that there was racial discrimination at gun and ammunition stores.
- **Some inactive shooters expressed a desire for shooting ranges and gun and ammunition stores to be more family friendly.**
 - This relates to the above about simply having more patient staff to assist people engaged in shooting, but being family friendly would also include (for some of the focus group participants) accommodations provided for their children while they shot.

DETAILED QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

In addition to the findings that are summarized above, the qualitative analysis found other important issues that were raised.

Ownership and Use of Firearms

- **Focus group participants expressed positive feelings, or at least no negative feelings, toward firearms in general.**
 - Inactive shooters did not indicate any objections to firearms in a personal or political sense. Most grew up with firearms in the home and had enjoyed shooting in the past. Rather, other factors or constraints have contributed to their lapse in activity.
- **Many inactive shooters own or possess guns that were inherited or otherwise gifted.**
 - It is quite common for inactive shooters to have firearms in the home that were passed down from generation to generation or that they received as gifts. Widows, as well, often end up with firearms that they personally do not use.

I've always had guns in my family, through my parents and grandparents.

My late husband, a police officer, had three different guns. Since he passed away, they're still at my house, and I've never shot them.

Constraints To Sport Shooting

➤ **There is a major need for information simply on how to participate in sport shooting.**

- A common theme in the focus groups was a lack of knowledge of where to go sport shooting. An additional related issue is that there was a lack of knowledge about the proper and legal way to transport firearms in vehicles. One focus group participant had not taken his firearm out of his house because he did not know how to legally transport the firearm from his house to a shooting range.

I wouldn't know where to go.

I come from Dallas, Texas, where you can shoot wherever. Coming here, there are so many restrictions, and you don't know where to shoot.

I wouldn't know how to get the gun to the range...; it's intimidating, taking the gun out of the house.

➤ **People want to shoot or train with others at a similar skill level and can feel intimidated or unwelcome around those more skilled.**

- This point was made many times throughout the focus groups. New shooters do not want to be embarrassed in front of those with more expertise, which was expressly noted as a deterrent. Shooting ranges are perceived by some participants as being exclusive to practiced shooters and unwelcoming to novices. Some participants expressed interest in a shooting class for beginners.

I don't want to be the guy not knowing what he's doing in front of everyone.

I would feel stupid if I went in there. I'm a guy...they're just going to look at me, like "Nobody ever showed you how to put bullets in a gun and shoot?"

When my male friends are talking about it at a much higher level,...that intimidates me.

How about a beginner's class?

➤ **The cost of ammunition is a major constraint to shooting participation.**

- Several focus group participants stated this, which appears to be a difficult obstacle for industry to address. One inactive shooter indicated that shooting seems like a sport for the affluent. Group discounts at shooting ranges were noted as a potential incentive to offset the cost of ammo.

Ammunition is expensive.

My thing is pricing. [Ammo] goes so quick.

I used to go target shooting a lot with my dad. I got free ammo...; once he moved, I just couldn't afford it.

It seems like a sport for really well-off people.

Potential Motivations for Shooting Participation

Many inactive shooters can be recruited back into shooting participation provided that the various constraints are satisfactorily addressed. Motivations to re-engage in shooting were discussed in both open-ended and direct questioning.

➤ **People will go shooting if asked by a friend or family member.**

- This was frequently noted in both groups. Indeed, this situation can address multiple constraints. A knowledgeable friend or family member will know where to go shooting, will know how to comply with laws and regulations, and can mentor the novice shooter without intimidation or judgment.

I would feel comfortable going in with my brother, who shoots regularly.... I could slip back into that pretty easily.

➤ **Many women are not completely comfortable shooting with so few other women around.**

- Some participants shot with women's groups in the past and had enjoyed the experience. A woman in one of the focus groups stated that she would actually be more comfortable shooting with women she did not know than with her male friends. Men in the groups said that they felt that their wives or female friends would be more likely to participate if other women were involved. Also, another focus group participant said that she would like to see women working at shooting ranges; she has only witnessed male employees in the past.

I have male friends, but I would be more comfortable going with women.

Get some girls working there. It's always guys working at the range.

➤ **Some who have firearms for home protection have not stayed in practice or cleaned and maintained their firearms.**

- Some of the focus group participants who bought or were given a firearm for home protection have never fired it. The focus group moderator offered an analogy of a car that sat idle for 3 years and asked participants whether they would feel safe driving it. With this perspective, participants said that they should practice in case of an emergency.

[According to my father], I need to have something at all times to protect me and my children. I never had to use it, but I do have it.

I don't care about becoming a skilled shooter, but for home protection...you need to shoot more than every 3 years.

➤ **People feel that they would be motivated by group discounts at shooting ranges.**

- Participants expressed interest when asked if they would be motivated to go shooting by a family, couple's, or group discount at a range.

If people learn about something and they can get a deal on it, they'll be enticed a lot more.

- **Some inactive shooters would participate if the range environment was more family-friendly.**
 - A few participants indicated a willingness to go shooting if the whole family could be accommodated.

Could you make it family friendly? Because most places I've been to where you buy a gun or go to a range are kind of rough around the edges. It's not like I can bring my child.

A lot of gyms have accommodations for the kids.

- **Inactive shooters are not motivated to increase their skill level as a primary goal.**
 - When directly asked, focus group participants did not care about improving their skill level unless it related to safety or home protection. Shooting for the challenge or sport, in other words, is not of much importance to these inactive shooters.

No, that [increasing skills] doesn't really matter to me.

Interest in Specific Sport Shooting Activities

In this final portion of the discussion, inactive shooters were asked about their level of interest in specific shooting activities.

- **Plinking is the shooting activity that was of most interest to the inactive shooters in the focus groups.**
 - Both focus groups reacted very favorably when read “shooting tin cans off a fence in a pasture,” easily the most popular of the named activities. However, many focus group participants indicated that outdoor shooting is not an option where they live—likely the case where most people live.
- **Ranges that rent firearms are of great interest to inactive shooters in the focus groups.**
 - The option of renting firearms at shooting ranges had great appeal to both focus groups, allowing focus group participants to speculate about different firearms they would like to try. The convenience of trying the activity first without spending large amounts on purchasing the gear also was mentioned.

I would like to try out larger handguns.

[I would like to try] an assault rifle.

I rented before. That's how I started shooting in the first place.

When you go paintballing, you don't have to have all the equipment. It's fun because you don't have to spend all the money for your own gear if you don't do it all the time.

- **In general in the focus groups, inactive shooters were moderately more interested in shooting with a handgun than shooting with a rifle.**
 - Overall there was a modest preference in the groups for trying handguns over rifles; some focus group participants expressed concern over the kick from rifles.

You have to hold [a rifle] the right way or you'll hurt your shoulder.

I never shot a rifle. The kickback concerns me.

- **Hunting was the least appealing of the shooting-related activities to the inactive shooters in the focus groups.**

I'm such an animal lover. I don't have a problem with people who hunt, but I couldn't.

4. SURVEY RESULTS

The survey results are presented thematically, rather than strictly in the order that the questions were asked in the surveys. This is because the order of the questions on a questionnaire is dictated not by theme but by the consideration of “order” bias and survey flow. In other words, some questions are put at the beginning of a survey so that the survey itself does not bias the responses, and thematically similar questions may, therefore, be separated in a survey questionnaire. The reporting of the results, however, makes the most sense if ordered thematically so that each topic area is covered in its own section.

In examining the results of the surveys, it is important to be aware that the survey questionnaires included several types of questions:

- Open-ended questions are those in which no answer set is read to the respondents; rather, they are able to respond with anything that comes to mind from the question.
- Closed-ended questions have an answer set from which to choose.
- Single or multiple response questions: Some questions allow only a single response, while other questions allow respondents to give more than one response or choose all that applies. Those that allow more than a single response are indicated on the graphs with the label, “Multiple Responses Allowed.”
- Scaled questions: Many closed-ended questions (but not all) are in a scale, such as a 0 to 10 scale.
- Series questions: Many questions are part of a series, and the results are primarily intended to be examined relative to the other questions in that series (although results of the questions individually can also be valuable). Typically, results of all questions in a series are shown together.

Most graphs show results rounded to the nearest integer; however, all data are stored in decimal format, and all calculations are performed on unrounded numbers. For this reason, some graphs may not sum to exactly 100% because of this rounding on the graphs. Additionally, rounding may cause apparent discrepancies of 1 percentage point between the graphs and the reported results of combined responses (e.g., when “much more” and “somewhat more” are summed to determine the total percentage saying “more”).

Finally, a review of the terminology used in this report is useful, as the categorization for the groups under study and the terms used to describe the groups are based on the survey data.

The following terminology is used in this report to describe various groups.

- **Firearm household** refers to a household in which there is a firearm.
- **Non-firearm household** refers to a household without a firearm.
- **Active shooter** refers to a shooter who has shot (or hunted) within the previous 5 years. Note that active shooters may also be broken down by their frequency of shooting:
 - **Avid active shooter** refers to a shooter who annually shoots 3 times or more.
 - **Infrequent active shooter** refers to a shooter who annually shoots less than 3 times.
- **Inactive shooter** refers to a person who has shot (or hunted) at some time in his/her lifetime but not within the previous 5 years.
- **Non-participant** refers to a person who has never shot (or hunted) in his/her lifetime.
- **Firearm owner** refers to a person who is the actual owner of the firearm in the firearm household.
- **Non-owner in a firearm household** refers specifically to a person in a firearm household who is not an actual owner of a firearm.
- **Non-firearm household member** will be the term to refer to these people who do not live in a household with a firearm and, therefore, also do not own a firearm.

FIREARMS IN HOUSEHOLDS

To better understand non-shooting firearm owners and others in firearm households who do not go shooting, it is necessary to first see what proportion of the general public that they make up. This starts with an estimate of the portion of the general public residing in a firearm household.

➤ **Research from Responsive Management and the Pew Research Center found that 42% to 45% of adult United States residents live in a household with a firearm.**

- According to Responsive Management's survey, just under half of United States residents (45%) report that they have a firearm in their household.
 - To put this percentage in perspective, a comparison was made with other research. A study put out by the Pew Research Center, *America's Complex Relationship With Guns: An In-Depth Look at the Attitudes and Experiences of U.S. Adults* (Parker, Horowitz, Igielnik, Oliphant, and Brown; 2017), found that 42% of United States adults live in a household with a firearm. This consists of the 30% who personally own a firearm and 11% who do not personally own a firearm but live in a household with one (the sum of these unrounded numbers is 42%).
- Responsive Management's survey research also found that 56% of adult United States residents lived in a household at some time while they were growing up that had a firearm.
 - Again, a comparison was made to the aforementioned Pew Research Center data: the Pew report shows that 48% of adults in the United States grew up in a household with a firearm.
- A final piece of data of interest here is that Responsive Management's study found that 74% of adult United States residents have shot a firearm at some time in their lives.
 - This compares to the Pew study, which found that 72% of adult Americans had fired a firearm at some time in their lives.
- Note that the finding above does not mean that 45% of households have firearms; that percentage would be close to 45% but likely not exactly 45% because not all households are the same size. Note that the finding is specifically that 45% of residents *live in a household with a firearm*.
- The next section looks at the characteristics of specific groups in the general population categorized by whether they have firearms in their households and by whether they have shot in the past 5 years, ever, or never.

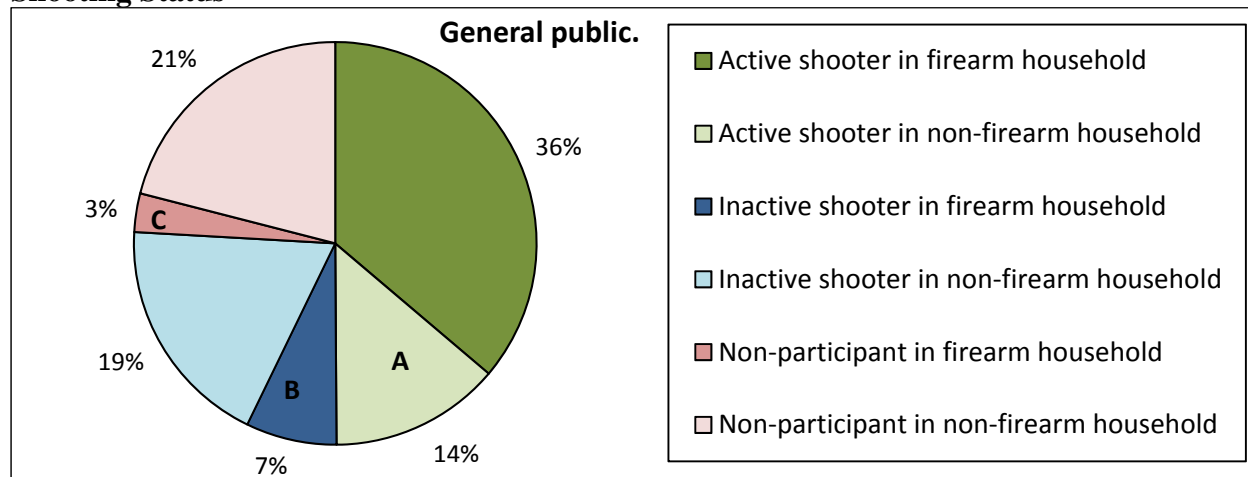
A GENERAL LOOK AT SHOOTERS AND NON-SHOOTERS AND THOSE WITH AND THOSE WITHOUT FIREARMS IN THEIR HOUSEHOLDS

- Along with active shooters in firearm households (who make up 36% of the general public), the sport shooting community has another 24% who would appear to be prime target audiences for boosting participation in sport shooting (Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1).
 - In categorizing the general public, a little more than a third are active shooters in a firearm household (36%)—the largest of the groups. However, the most interest among the sport shooting community looking to boost participation and firearm ownership are in the following groups:
 - Active shooters in a non-firearm household (14% of the general public; “A” on the graph).
 - Inactive shooters in a firearm household (7% of the general public; “B”).
 - Non-participants in a firearm household (3% of the general public; “C”).
 - Together, these groups of interest make up about a quarter (24%) of the general population. These three groups are examined in detail on the next few pages (active shooters in firearm households are examined later in the report).

Table 4.1. Categorization of the General Public According to Firearm and Shooting Status—Matrix

	Shot with or hunted with a firearm in the past 5 years	Shot with or hunted with a firearm ever, but neither in the past 5 years	Never shot or hunted with a firearm
Firearm household	Active shooter in a firearm household: 36% of U.S. residents	Inactive shooter in a firearm household: 7% of U.S. residents (labeled “B” on graph)	Non-participant in a firearm household: 3% of U.S. residents (labeled “C” on graph)
Non-firearm household	Active shooter in a non-firearm household: 14% of U.S. residents (labeled “A” on graph)	Inactive shooter in a non-firearm household: 19% of U.S. residents	Non-participant in a non-firearm household: 21% of U.S. residents

Figure 4.1. Categorization of the General Public According to Firearm and Shooting Status



- Looking first at active shooters in non-firearm households (making up 14% of the general public, labeled as “A”), they tend to be relatively evenly split on gender, younger (they are particularly not in the oldest age group), *not* overwhelmingly white, Southern, more educated, more urban, and split on whether they grew up with a firearm or not (Table 4.2).
- Inactive shooters in firearm households (7%, labeled “B”) tend to be female, older—particularly in the oldest age group, overwhelmingly white, Southern or Midwestern, less educated, rural, and to have grown up with a firearm (Table 4.2).
- Non-participants in firearm households (3%, labeled “C”) tend to be female, older (but not as old as inactive shooters in firearm households), *not* overwhelmingly white, Southern or Midwestern, in the middle of these three groups regarding education, highly urban, and to be split regarding growing up with a firearm (Table 4.2).

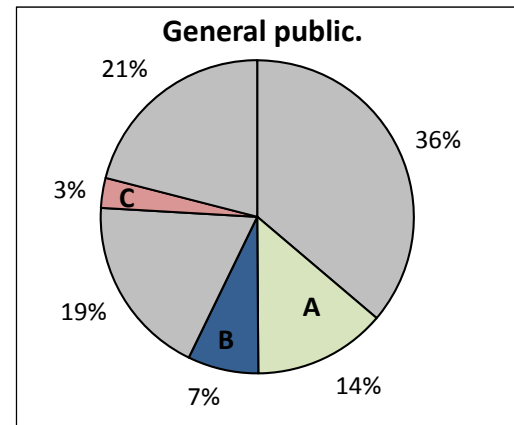


Table 4.2. Characteristics of Three Groups of Interest in the General Public

Characteristic		Percentage			
		A	B	C	US
Gender	Male	53	36	19	49
	Female	47	64	81	51
Age	65 years old or older	6	43	22	18
	55-64 years old	11	22	25	16
	45-54 years old	13	13	25	17
	35-44 years old	14	12	15	15
	25-34 years old	34	5	3	17
	18-24 years old	21	4	7	12
Ethnicity	White	68	91	67	74
	Black or African-American	18	6	12	11
	Hispanic or Latino	8	1	16	7
Region of residence	Northeast	19	16	17	18
	South	39	33	37	37
	Midwest	15	28	27	21
	Mountain West	11	9	8	7
	Pacific West	16	15	10	16
Educational attainment	Not a high school graduate	3	6	4	4
	High school graduate or equivalent	21	34	29	23
	Some college or trade school, no degree	15	14	17	18
	Associate's or trade school degree	11	11	11	12
	Bachelor's degree	35	15	23	24
	Master's degree	11	14	14	12
Residence	Professional or doctorate degree	4	4	1	4
	Large city or urban area	33	14	22	23
	Suburban area	18	25	34	21
	Small city or town	31	30	26	31
	Rural area on a farm or ranch	5	9	2	7
Grew up with a firearm	Rural area not on a farm or ranch	12	22	16	16
	Yes	52	81	57	56
	No	47	18	42	40

A=Active in a non-firearm household; B=Inactive in a firearm household; C=Non-participant in a firearm household. Last column shows the US as a whole for comparison.

- The report now looks at firearm households in comparison to non-firearm households. Those living in firearm households, compared to their non-firearm counterparts, are more likely to be white, male, in the older age groups, to be from the South or Midwest Regions, and to be living in a rural area. Education differences are not as notable. A final graph re-affirms the link between growing up with a firearm and being in a firearm household. See Figures 4.2 through 4.5.

Figure 4.2. Ethnic Backgrounds of Firearm and Non-Firearm Households

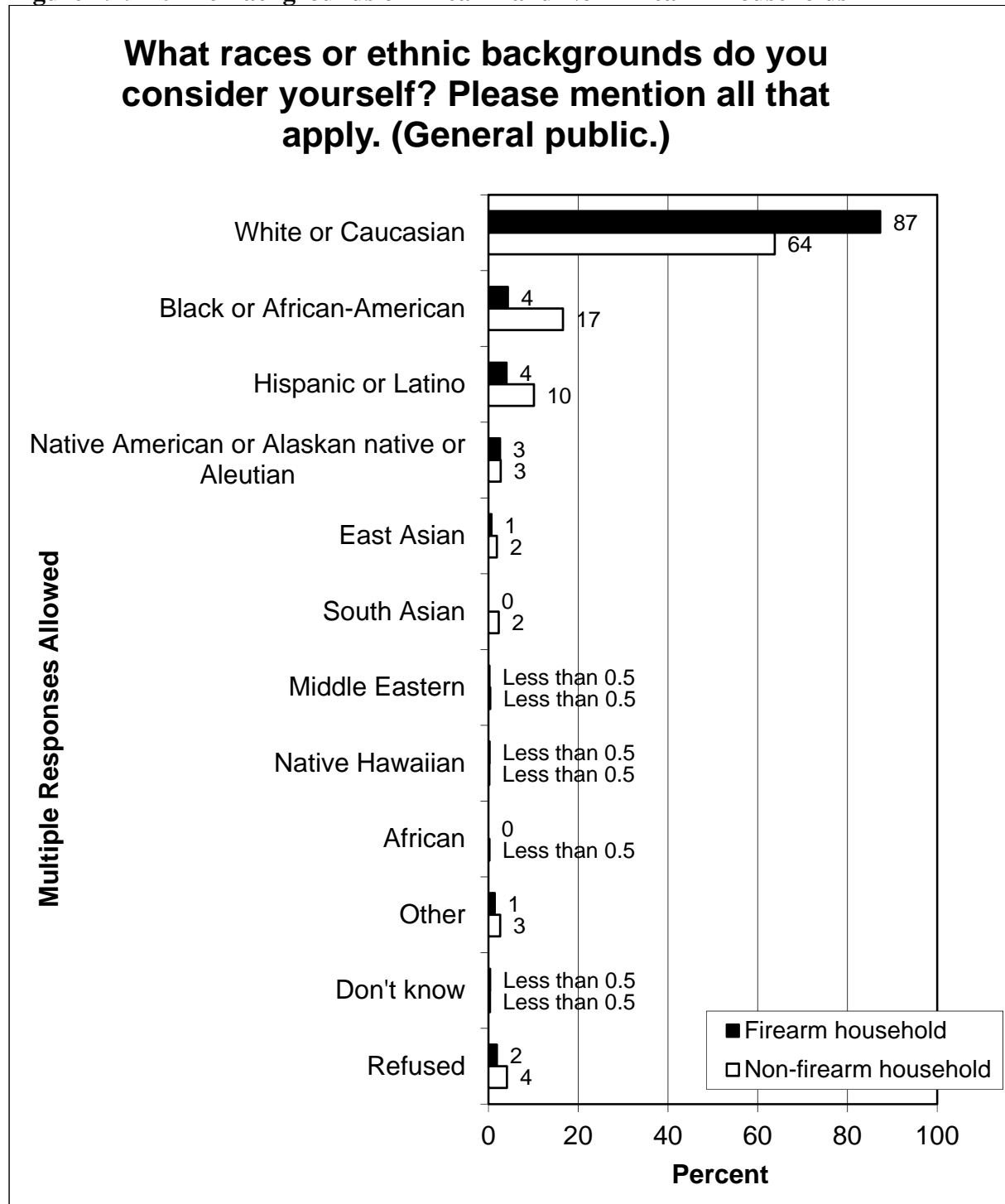


Figure 4.3. Firearm and Non-Firearm Households Crosstabulated by Gender, Age, Region of Residence, and Education Level

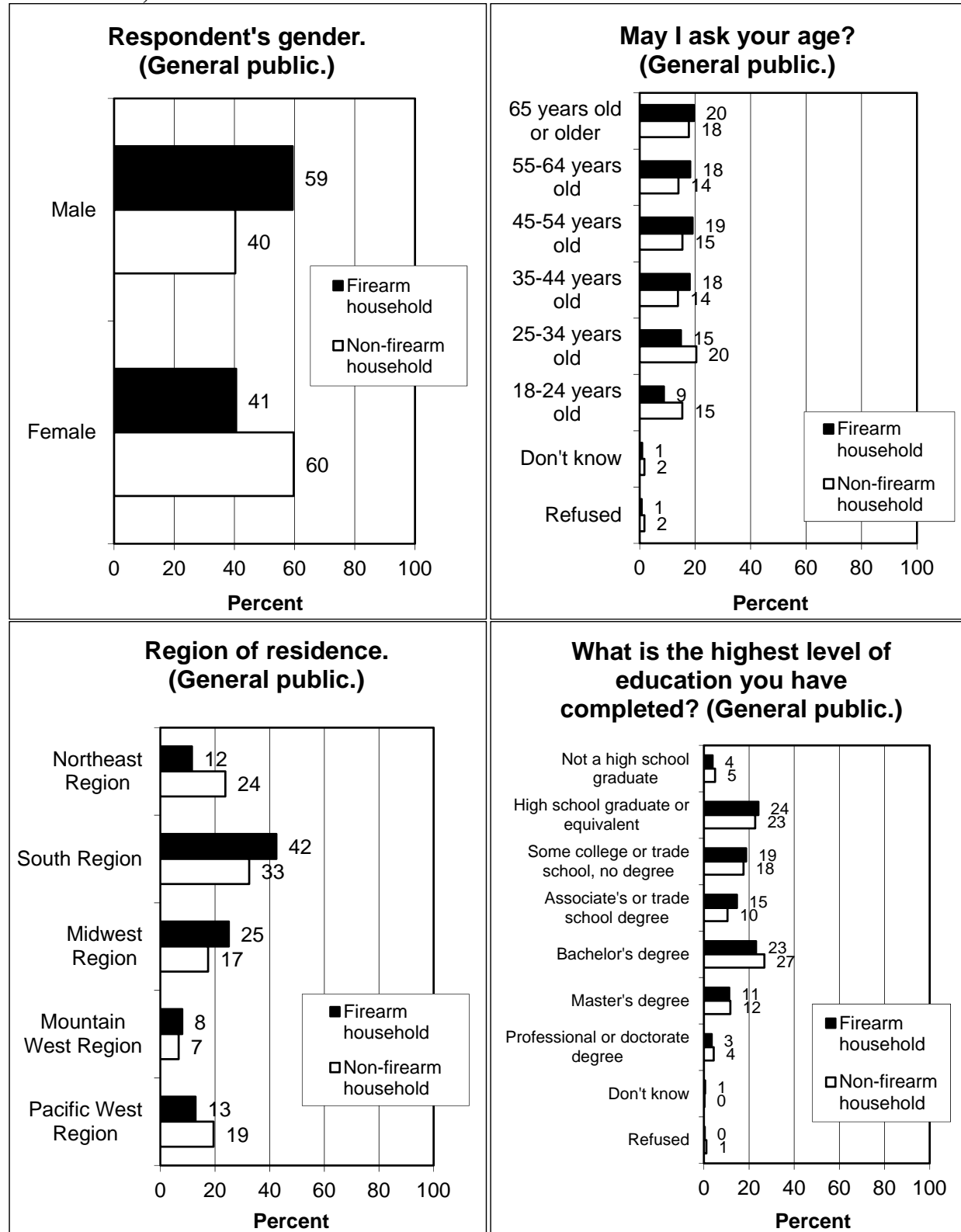
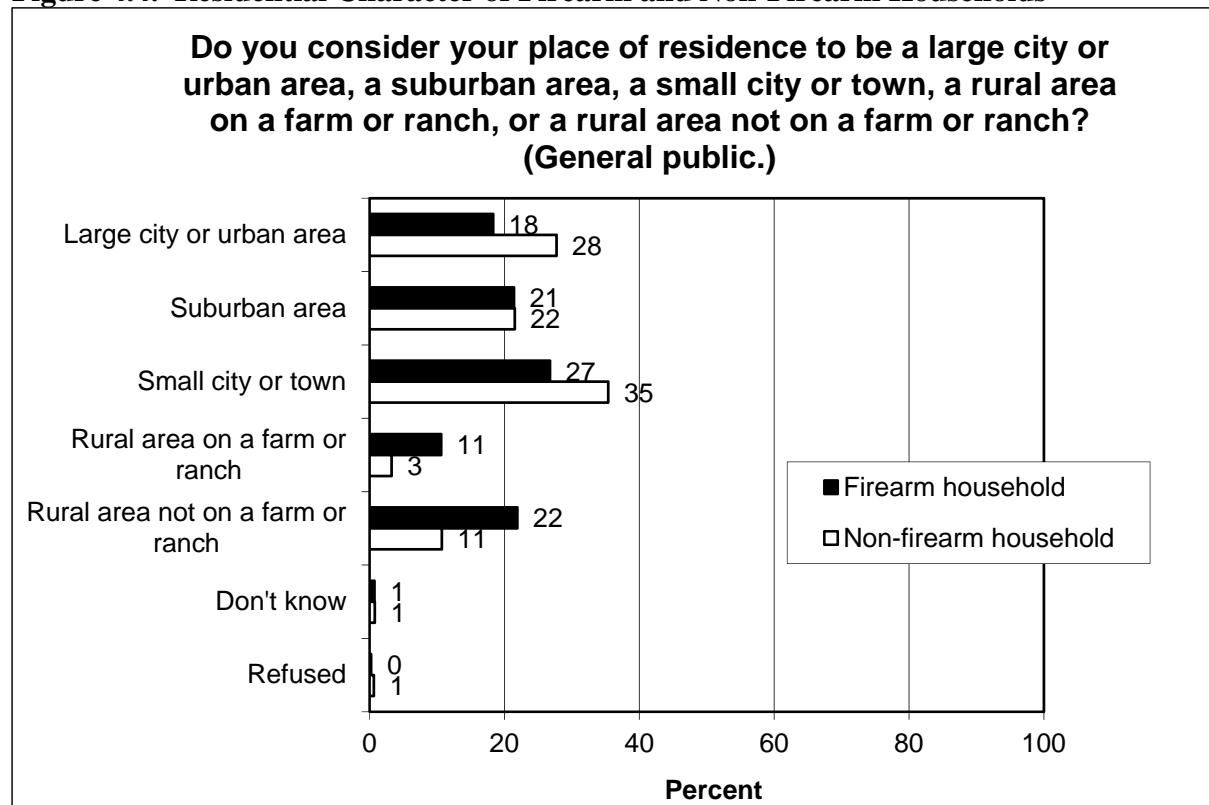
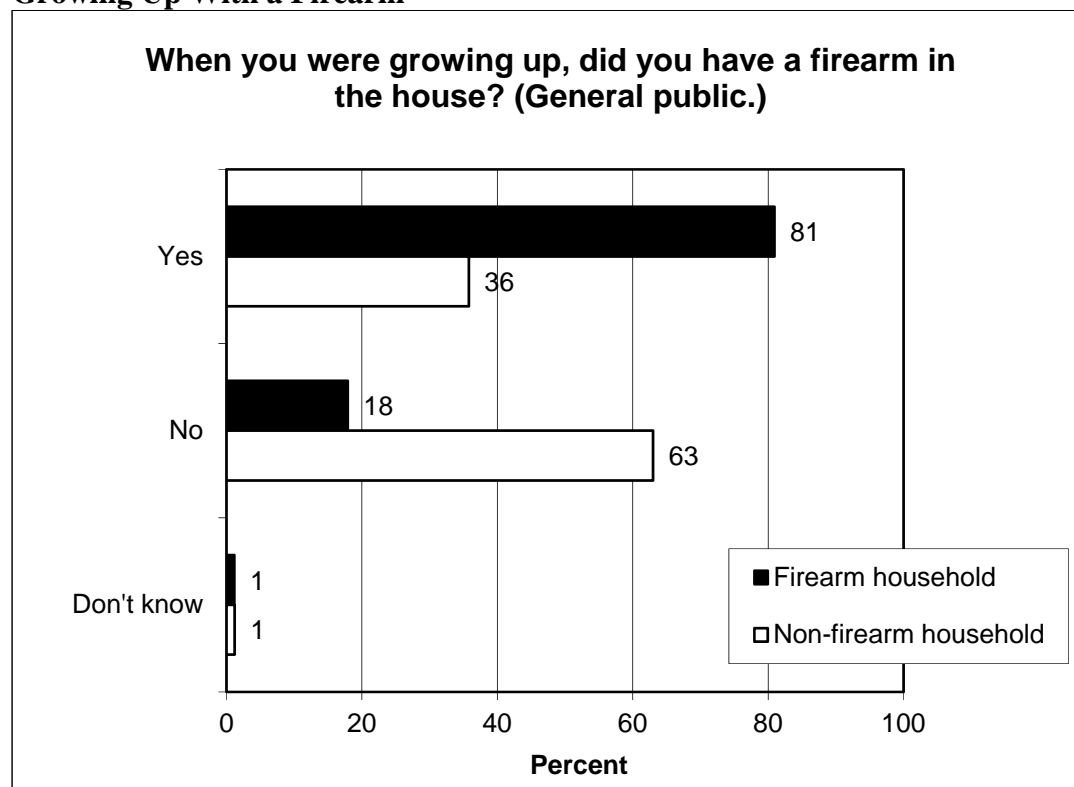


Figure 4.4. Residential Character of Firearm and Non-Firearm Households**Figure 4.5. Firearm and Non-Firearm Households Crosstabulated by Growing Up With a Firearm**

- In addition to the crosstabulations above by firearm/non-firearm household, the three groups of shooters were crosstabulated by the same demographic characteristics. Active shooters, relative to the other groups, tend to be more white, more male, in the middle age groups, Southern, rural, and to have grown up with a firearm (Figures 4.6 through 4.9).
- Specifically, the crosstabulations looked at the following groups, regardless of whether they resided in a firearm household or not:
 - Active shooters (shot in the past 5 years).
 - Inactive shooters (did not shoot in the past 5 years but have shot at some time in their lives).
 - Non-participants (never shot).

Figure 4.6. Ethnic Backgrounds of Groups Categorized by Shooting Participation

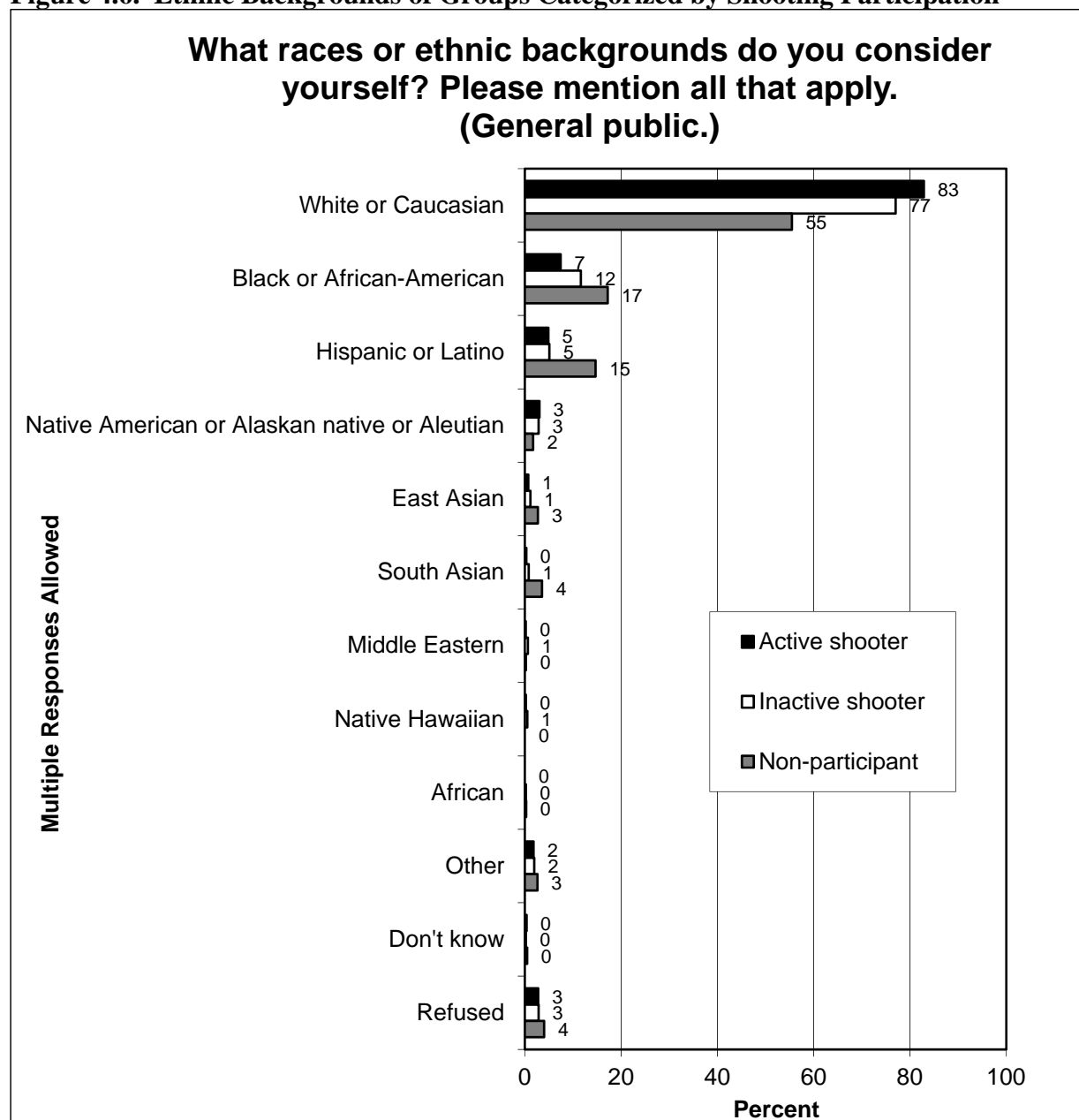


Figure 4.7. Groups Defined by Shooting Participation Crosstabulated by Gender, Age, Region of Residence, and Education Level

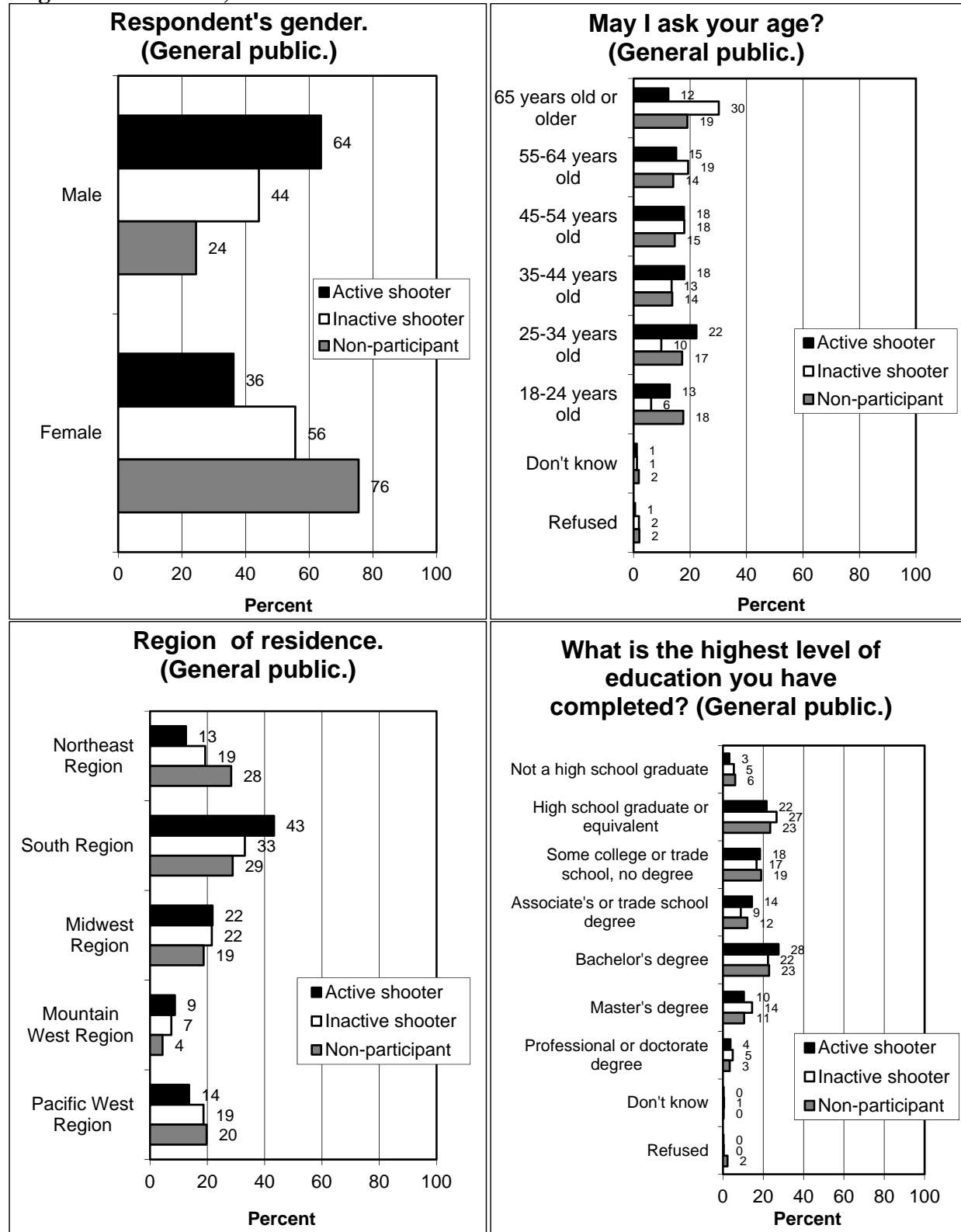
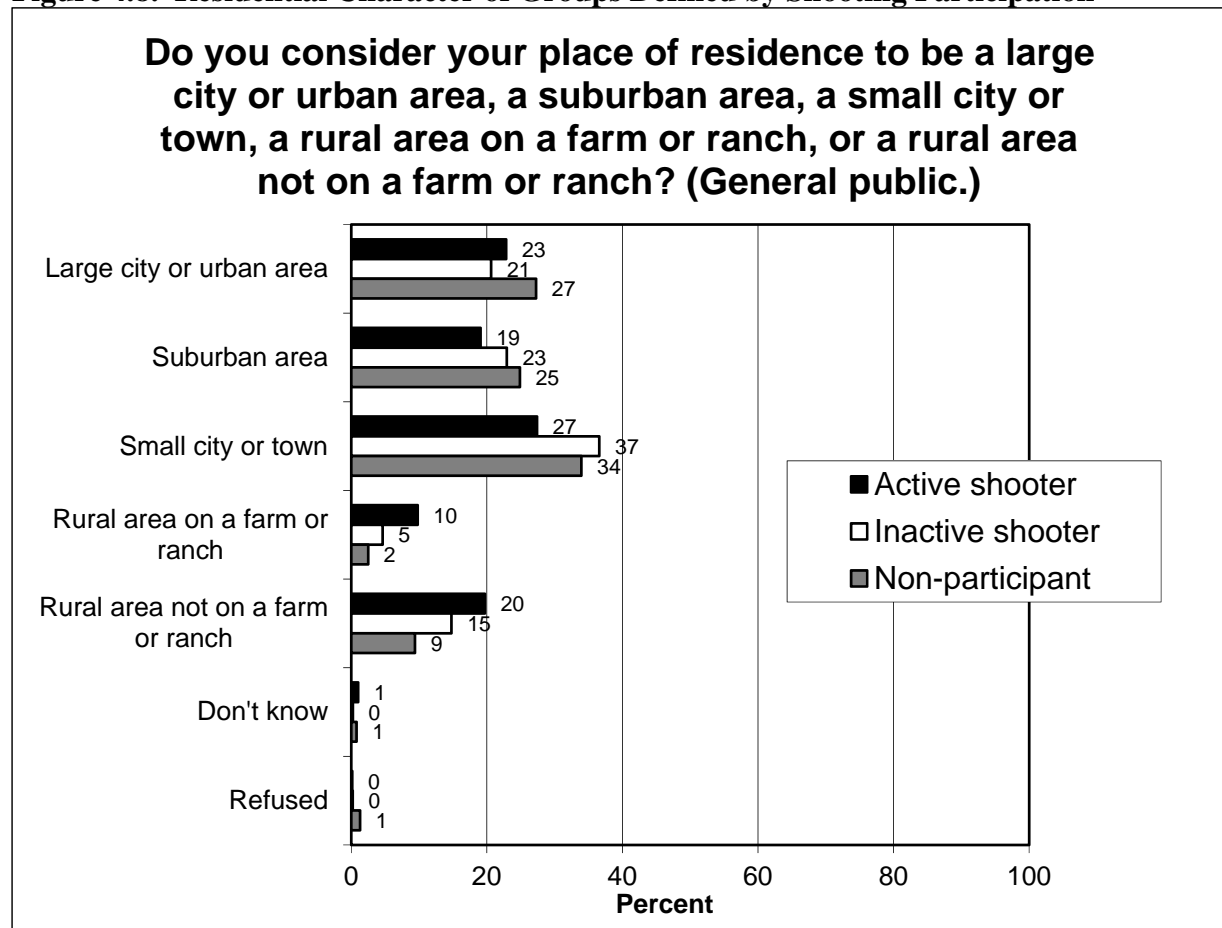
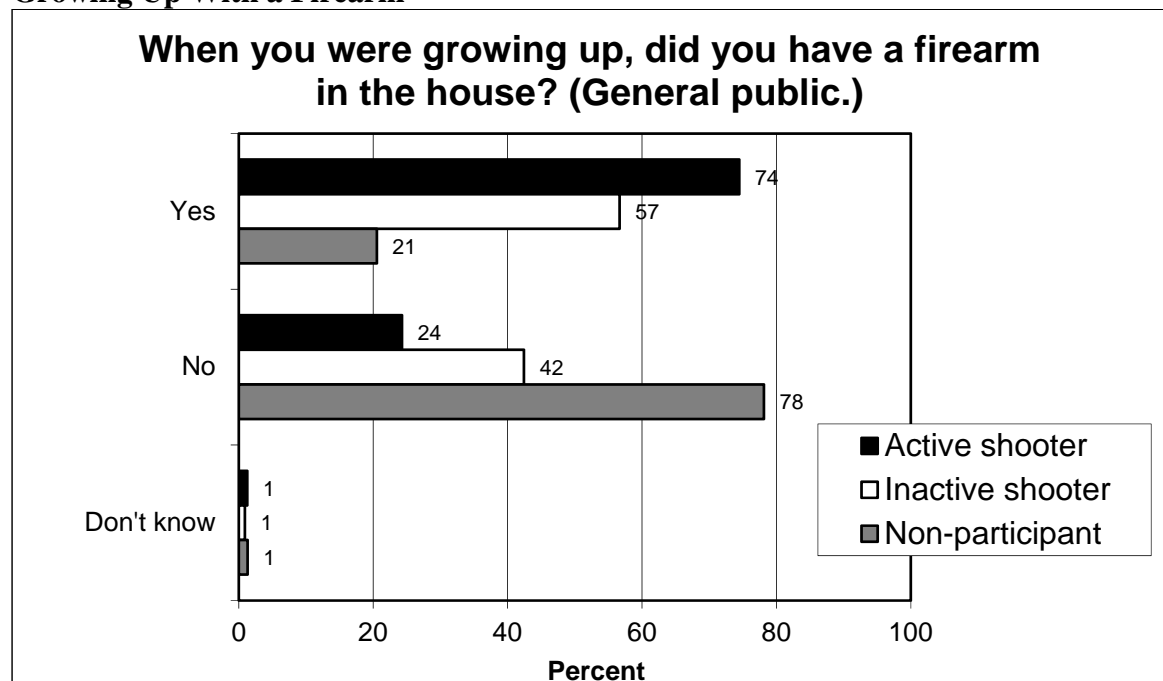


Figure 4.8. Residential Character of Groups Defined by Shooting Participation**Figure 4.9. Groups Defined by Shooting Participation Crosstabulated by Growing Up With a Firearm**

- The final set of graphs shows the same demographic characteristics among the six groups of the general public, defined as shown in the matrix in Table 4.1 (Figures 4.10 through 4.13).
- Moving down the bars from solid black at top to crosshatch at bottom is moving, in general, from those who are the most amenable to those who are the least amenable toward sport shooting.
 - On some of the graphs, “don’t know” and “refused” responses were omitted, as well as responses at low percentages, to improve legibility.

Figure 4.10. Ethnic Backgrounds of Groups Categorized by Shooting Participation and Firearm Household

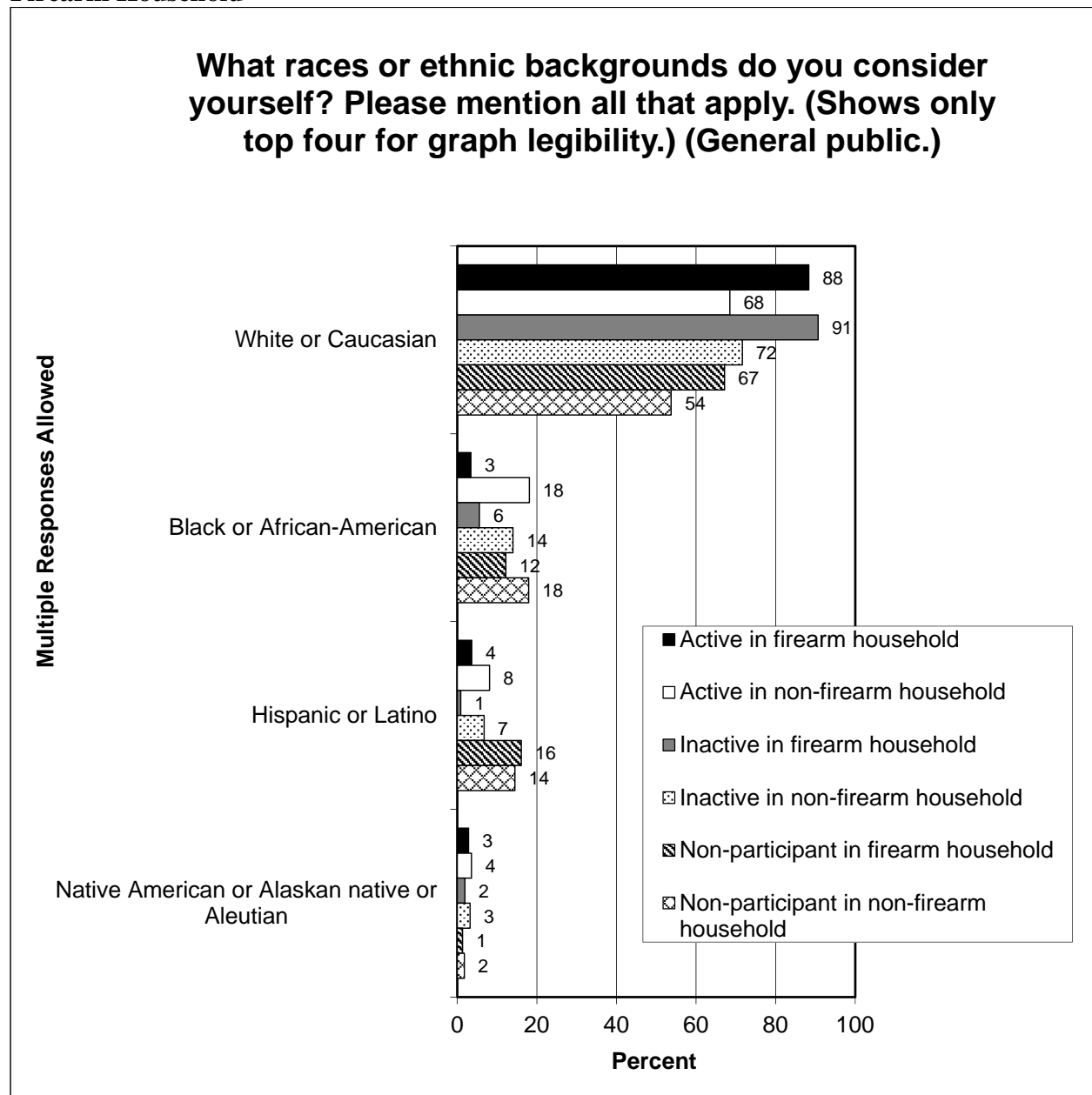


Figure 4.11. Groups Defined by Shooting Participation and Firearm Household Crosstabulated by Gender, Age, Region of Residence, and Education Level

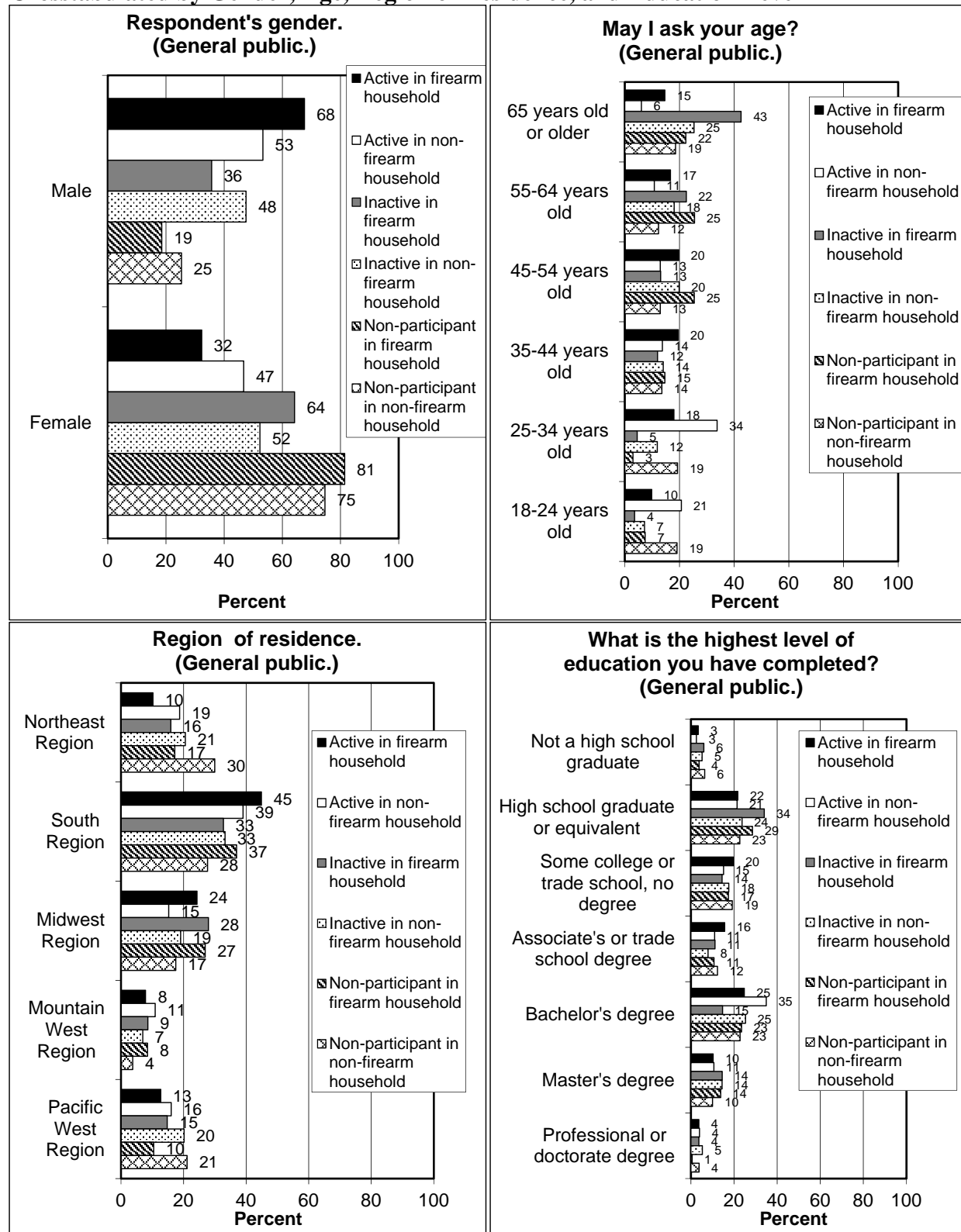


Figure 4.12. Residential Character of Groups Defined by Shooting Participation and Firearm Household

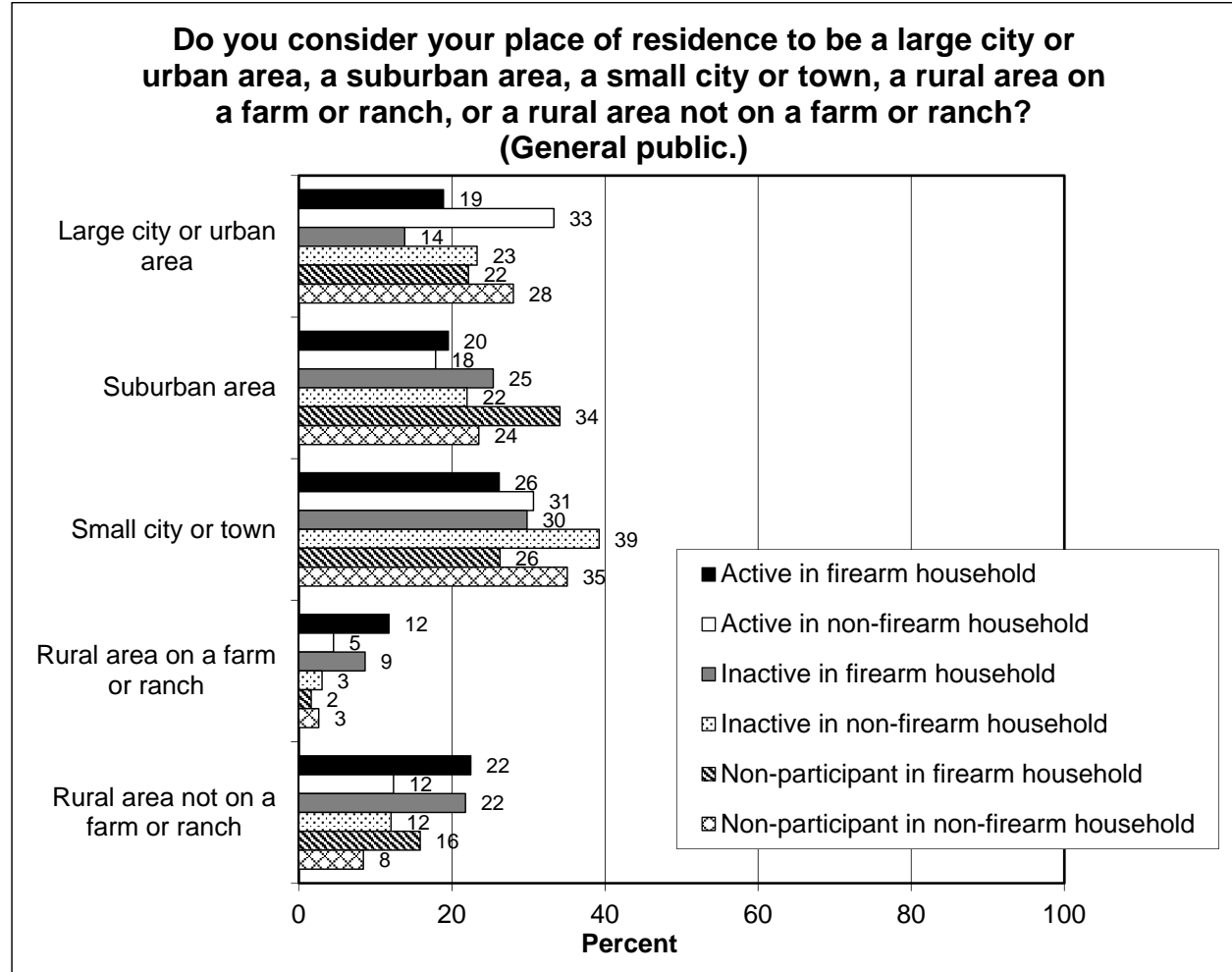
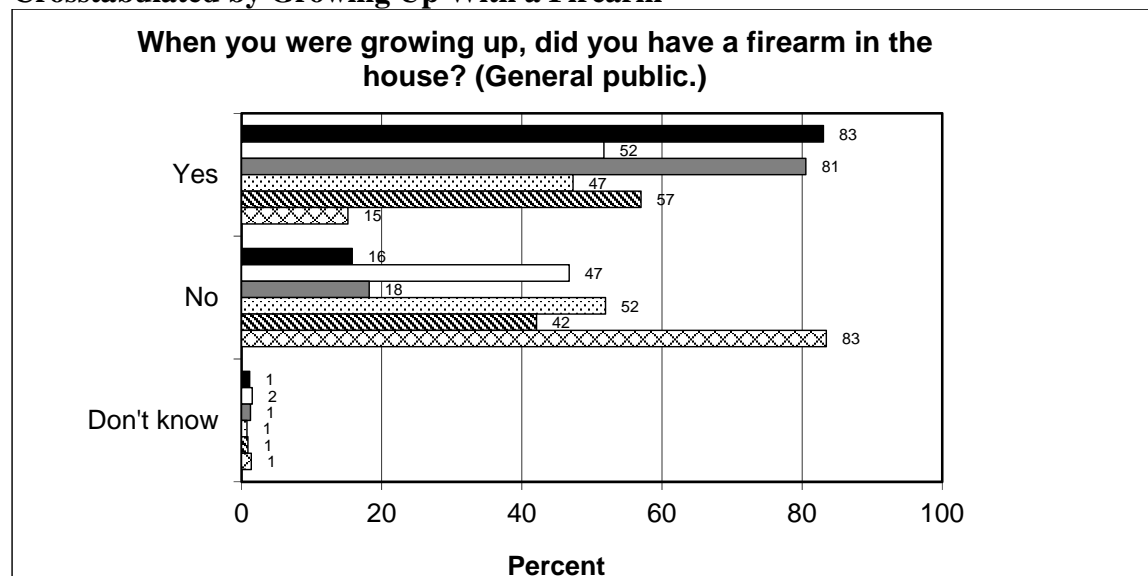


Figure 4.13. Groups Defined by Shooting Participation and Firearm Household Crosstabulated by Growing Up With a Firearm



AN OVERVIEW OF FIREARM HOUSEHOLDS

At this point, the report now focuses on *firearm households*. For detailed information on firearm household members, online survey data were examined along with the telephone survey data of the general public. The online survey included questions on frequency of shooting and personal ownership of firearms, allowing those in firearm households to be categorized in several useful ways for this project.

Those in firearm households could be categorized as shown in Table 4.3 based on their frequency of shooting (working from the most avid down to those who have never shot in their lifetimes) and whether they own a firearm or are simply non-owners in a firearm household. The dark gray cells are the primary focus of this project (firearm owners who are *not* active shooters); the light gray cell is also of interest, however, as representing a firearm owner who could be encouraged to shoot more.

Table 4.3. Categorization of the Those in *Firearm Households* According to Frequency of Shooting and Ownership of Firearms—Matrix

	Shot a firearm in past 5 years; shoots 3 or more times per year	Shot a firearm in past 5 years; shoots less than 3 times per year	Did not shoot a firearm in past 5 years but has ever shot	Has never shot a firearm
Owens a firearm	Avid active shooter, firearm owner	Infrequent active shooter, firearm owner	Inactive shooter, firearm owner	Non-participant, firearm owner
Does not own a firearm	Avid active shooter, non-owner in a firearm household	Infrequent active shooter, non-owner in a firearm household	Inactive shooter, non-owner in a firearm household	Non-participant, non-owner in a firearm household

To help make sense of the groups in the matrix, some of the groups were combined for the analyses, leaving five groups.

- Avid active shooters (whether they own a firearm or not) were combined into one group.
- Infrequent active shooters (whether they own a firearm or not) were combined into one group.
- Inactive shooters who are firearm owners were analyzed on their own.
- Non-participants who are firearm owners were also analyzed on their own.
- The remaining non-owners (both inactive shooters and non-participants) were combined into one group.

The analyses first looks at inactive shooters who are firearm owners as one of the two primary groups of interest in this project.

INACTIVE SHOOTERS, FIREARM OWNERS

This section examines the demographic characteristics of firearm owners who are inactive shooters. It then looks at motivations, likely interest in shooting, and constraints of this group.

Demographic Characteristics and Data About *Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners*

- **The following shows the demographic characteristics associated with this group. The typical firearm owner who is an inactive shooter is a male, middle aged, white, suburban or urban, without children in his/her household.**
 - Firearm owners who are inactive shooters are composed of slightly more males (59%) than females (41%) (Figure 4.14). (It is interesting to compare this to the proportion of sport shooters who are female. In a study of 2016 shooters—i.e., they had participated in sport shooting during that calendar year—31% of these sport shooters were female. See *Sport Shooting Participation in the United States in 2016*, a study conducted for the NSSF by Responsive Management in 2017.)
 - More than half of inactive shooters who own firearms (58%) are 45 years old or older (Figure 4.15). The mean is 46.41 years.
 - Although largely white (82%), they also have 7% who identify as Latino and 7% who identify as African-American (Figure 4.16).
 - A little more than a third are suburban residents (37%), and a quarter are urban (25%), which means that 62% are in the urbanized end of the continuum (Figure 4.17). At the other end, 16% are rural.
 - Just under half (44%) have a bachelor's degree (with or without a higher degree) (Figure 4.18).
 - Just under a quarter are retired (23%) (Figure 4.19). Common fields of occupation include computer, electronics, technical (9% of those not retired), manufacturing, factory, industry (8%), education (7%), and transportation, shipping, warehousing (7%) (Figure 4.20).
 - The final purely demographic characteristic in this section is whether or not children (either minor children or adult children of the respondent) live in the household: 35% of this group have minor children living at home (Figure 4.21), and 40% have any children (including adult children) living at home (Figure 4.22).
- **The majority of this group grew up in a suburban or urban area.**
 - The survey asked about the residential area in which the respondent grew up (Figure 4.23). The results mirror where respondents currently live, with only small differences, the primary one being that inactive shooters who own firearms were a little more rural when growing up than they are now.
- **Regarding length of time owning a firearm, the results show quite a split, with roughly equal percentages being relatively new owners (owning for 5 years or less) and being long-term owners (owning for more than 25 years).**
 - About a quarter of this group have owned a firearm for 5 years or less (27%), while approximately the same percentage have owned a firearm for more than 25 years (28%), with the rest in the middle (Figure 4.24).
- **Most commonly, this group is conservative or in the middle, when asked where they stand politically.**
 - The last graph in this section (Figure 4.25) shows the political leanings of those in firearm households. They are more conservative (36%) or middle of the road (30%) than liberal (26%).

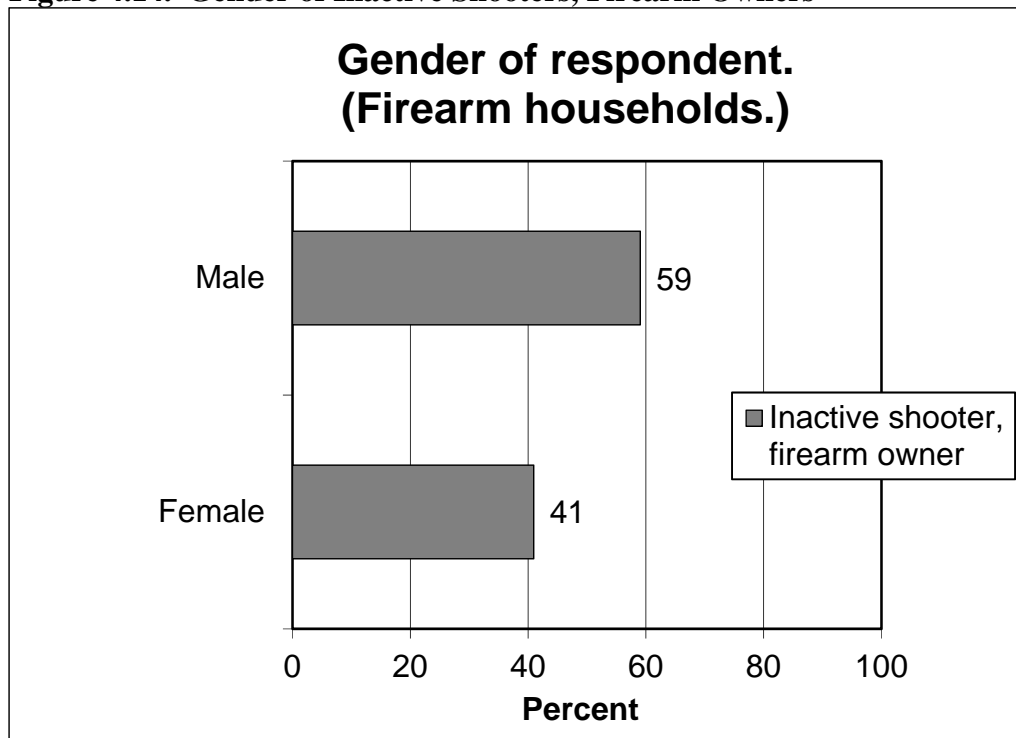
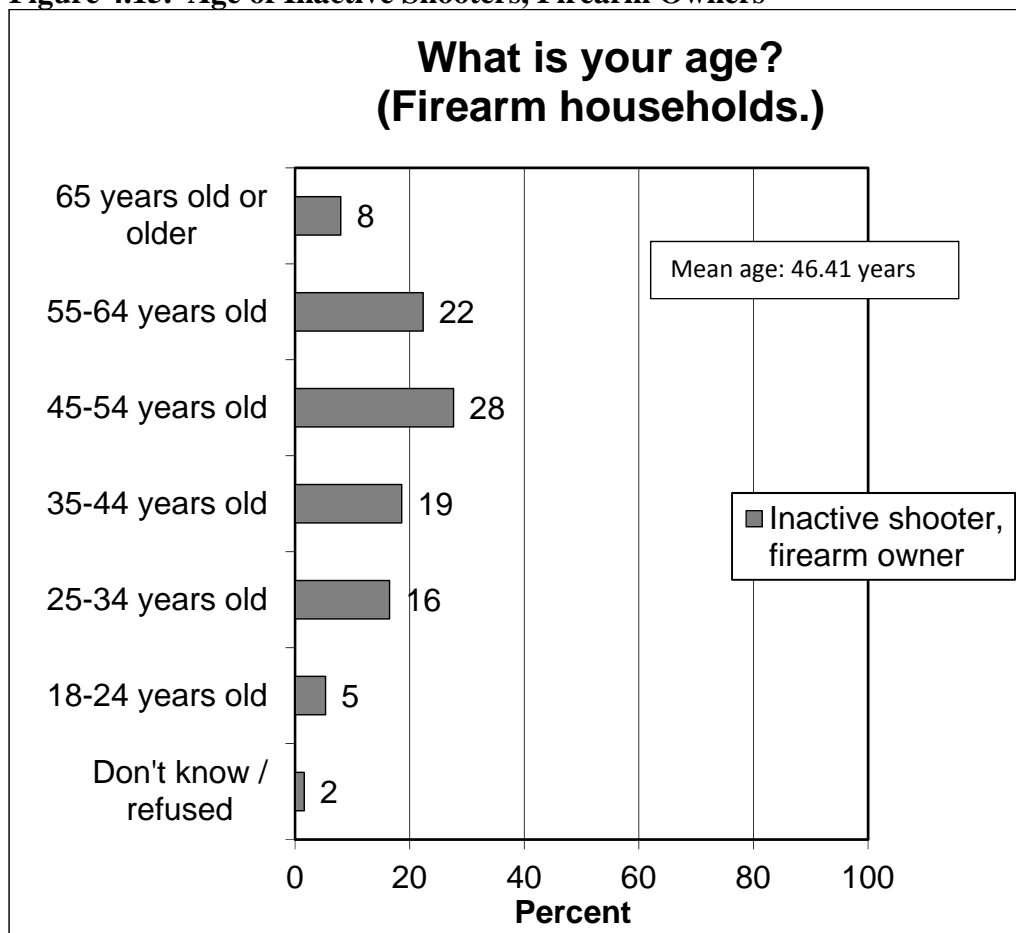
Figure 4.14. Gender of Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners**Figure 4.15. Age of Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners**

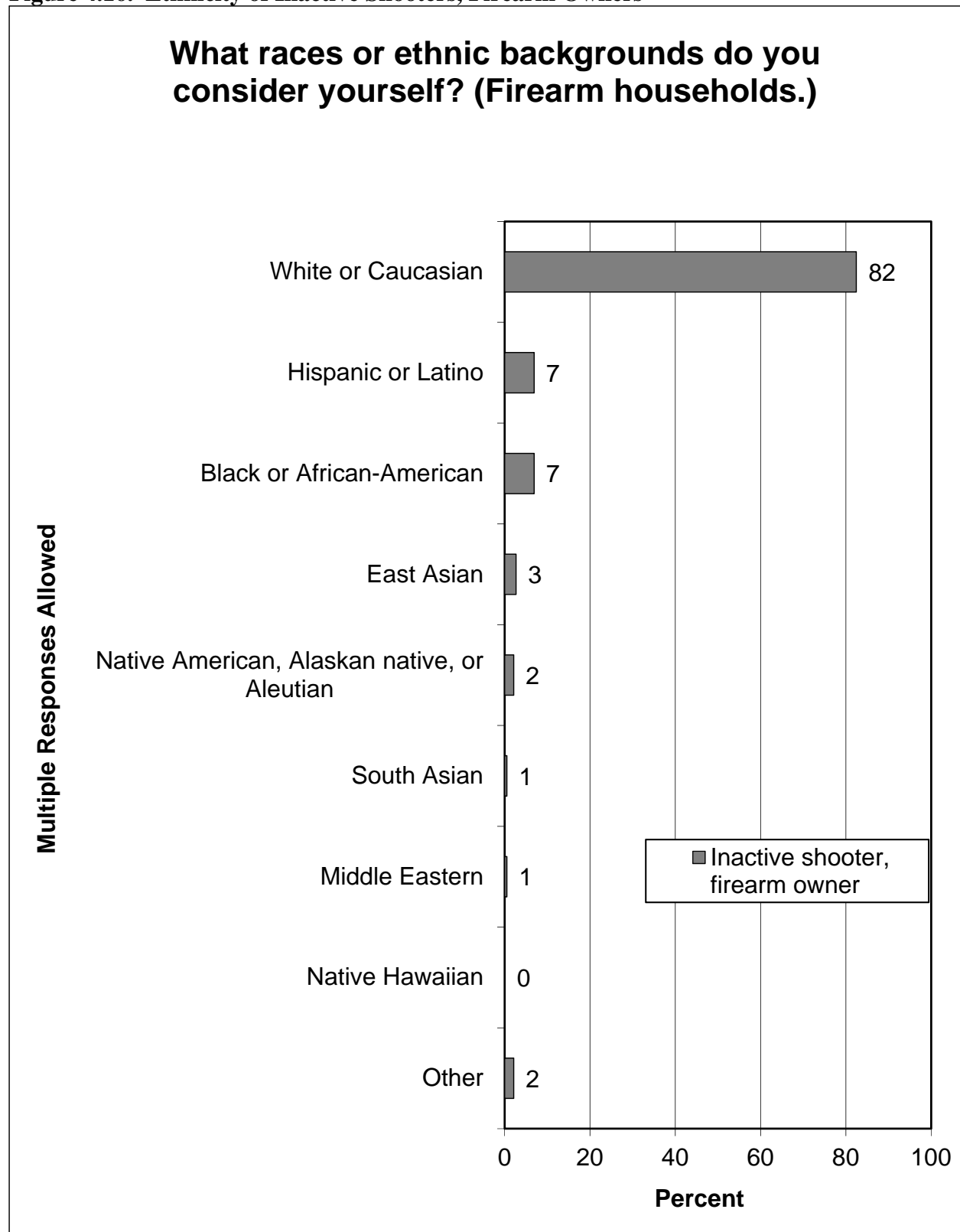
Figure 4.16. Ethnicity of Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners

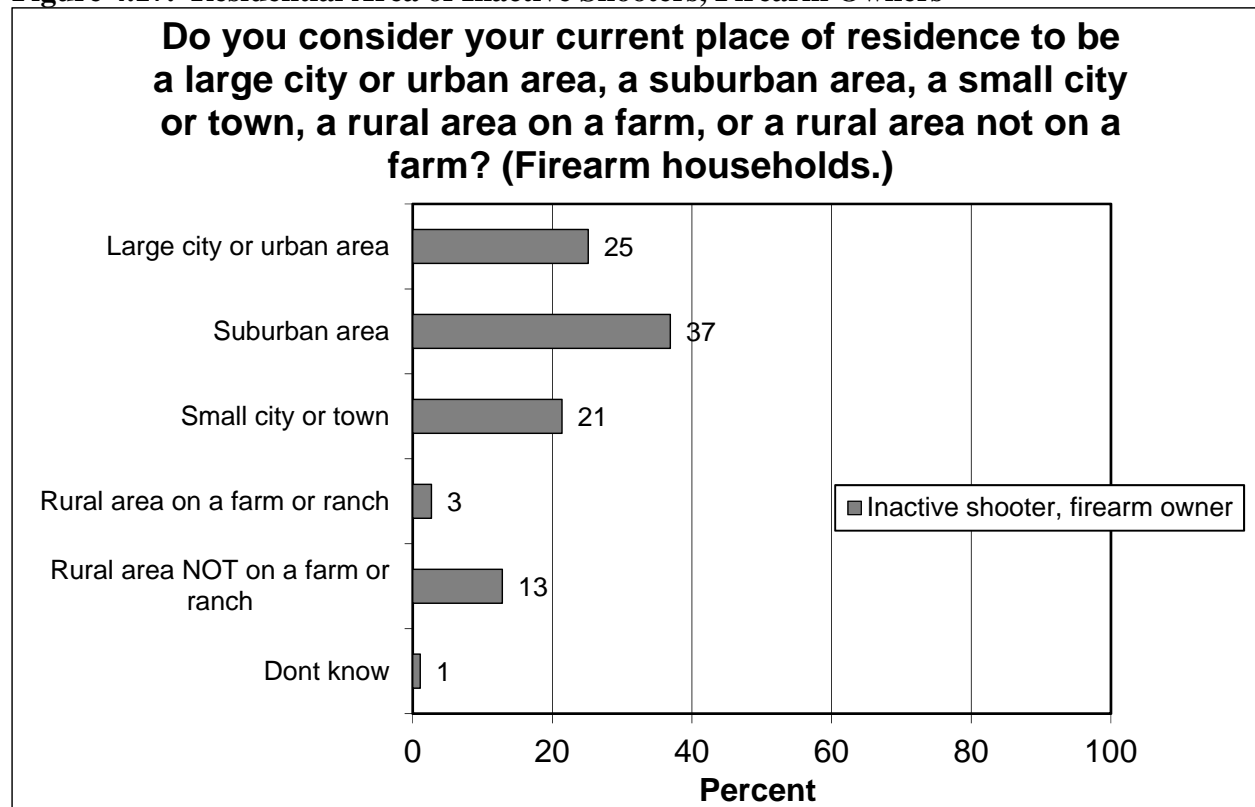
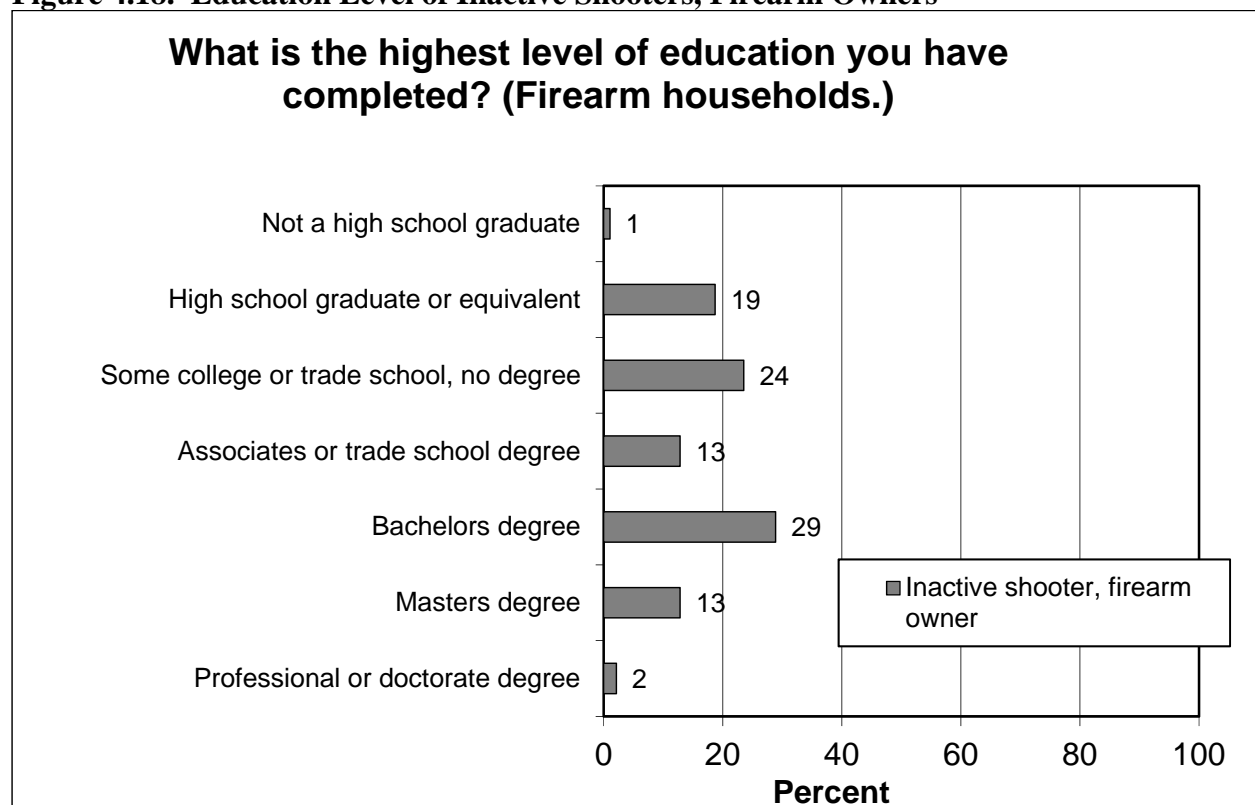
Figure 4.17. Residential Area of Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners**Figure 4.18. Education Level of Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners**

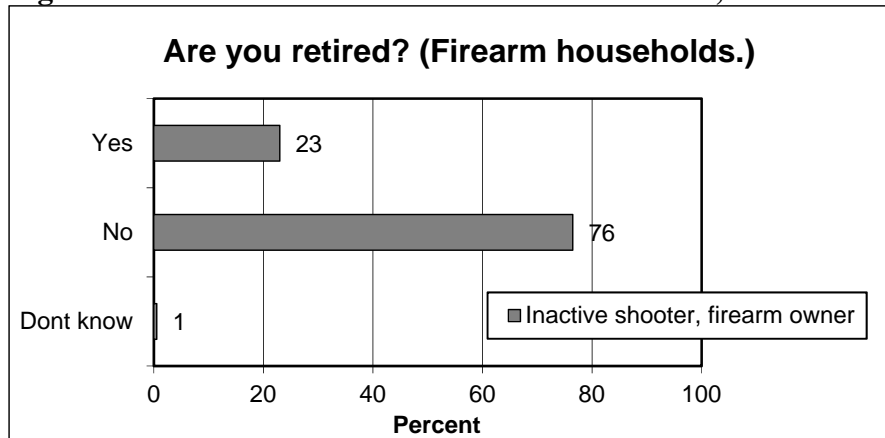
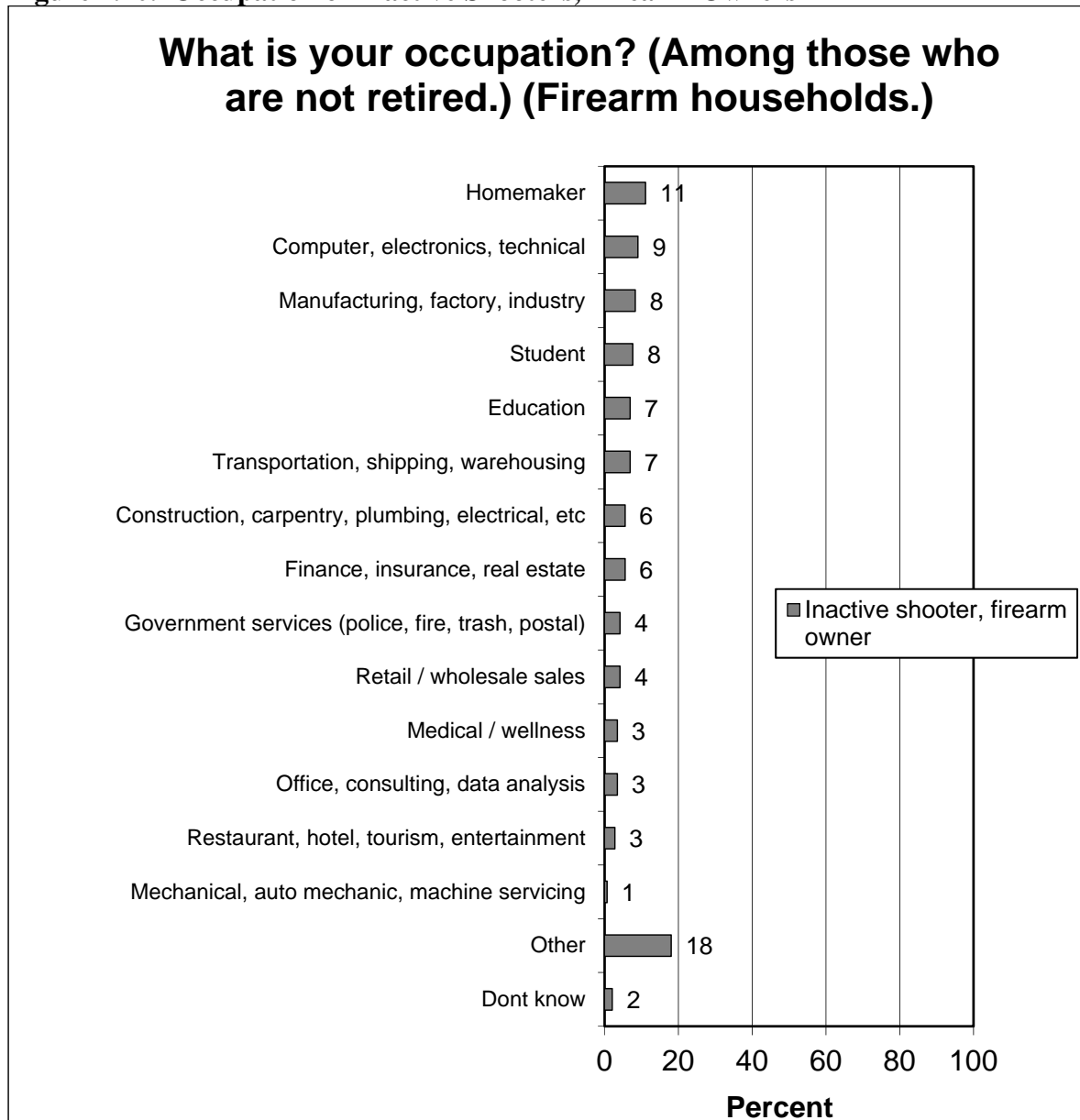
Figure 4.19. Retirement Status of Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners**Figure 4.20. Occupation of Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners**

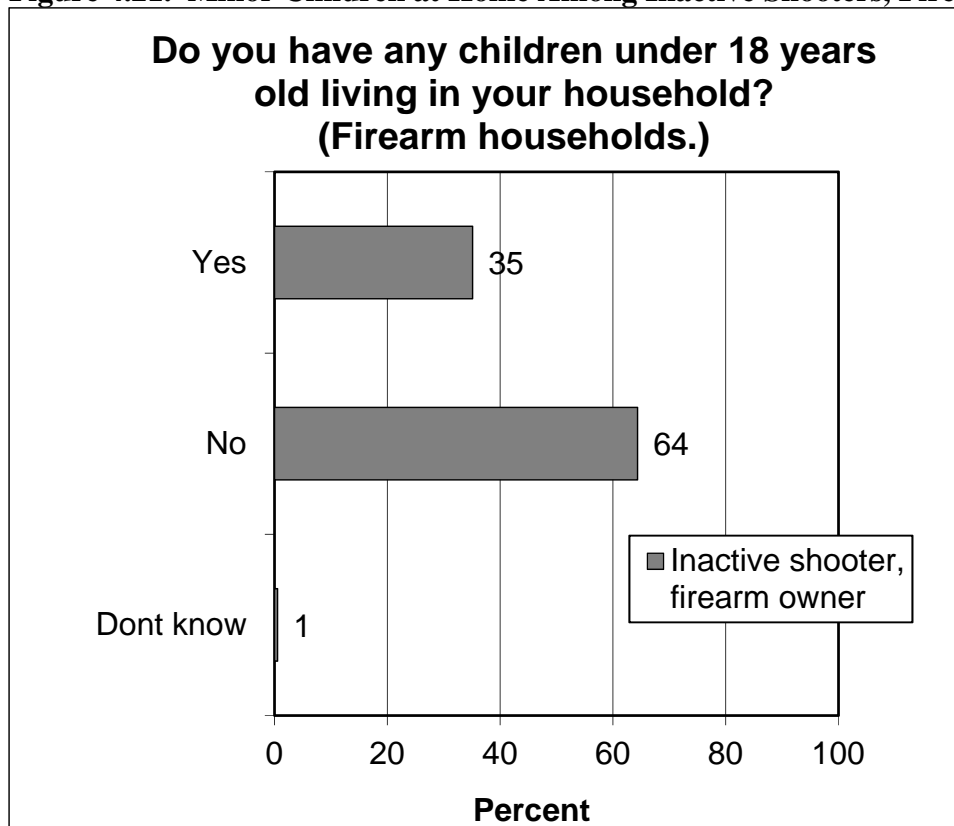
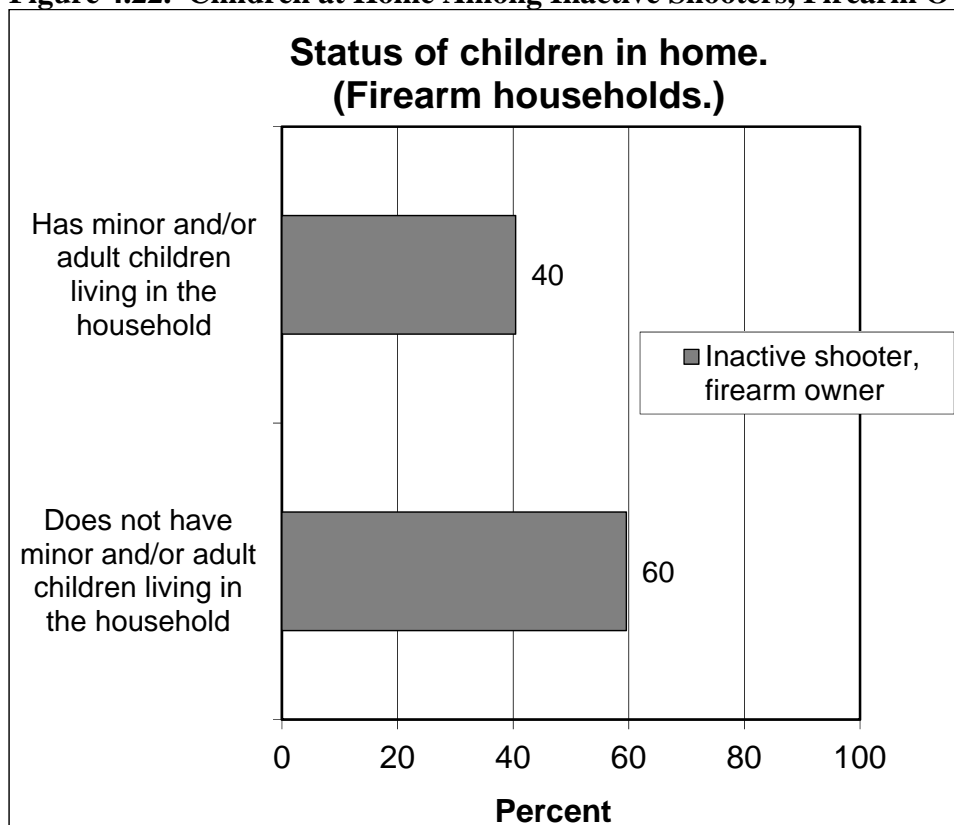
Figure 4.21. Minor Children at Home Among Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners**Figure 4.22. Children at Home Among Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners**

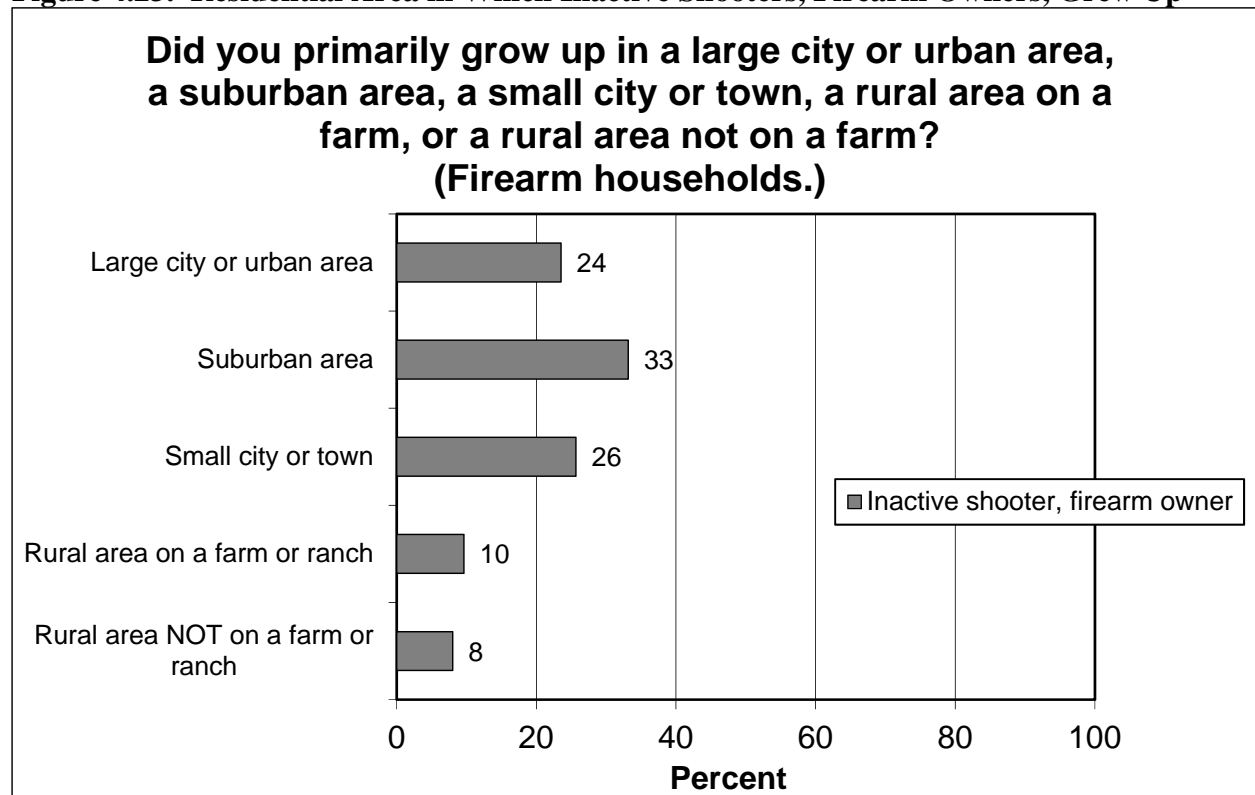
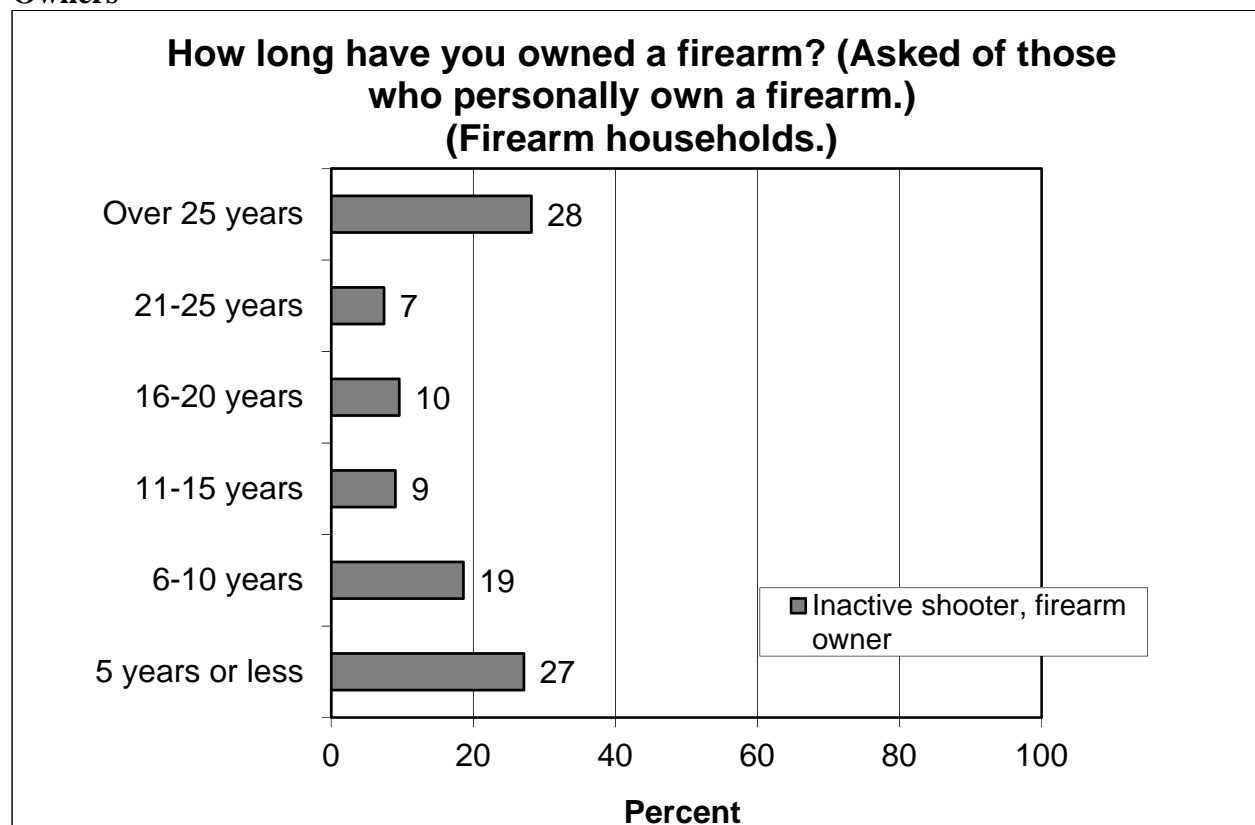
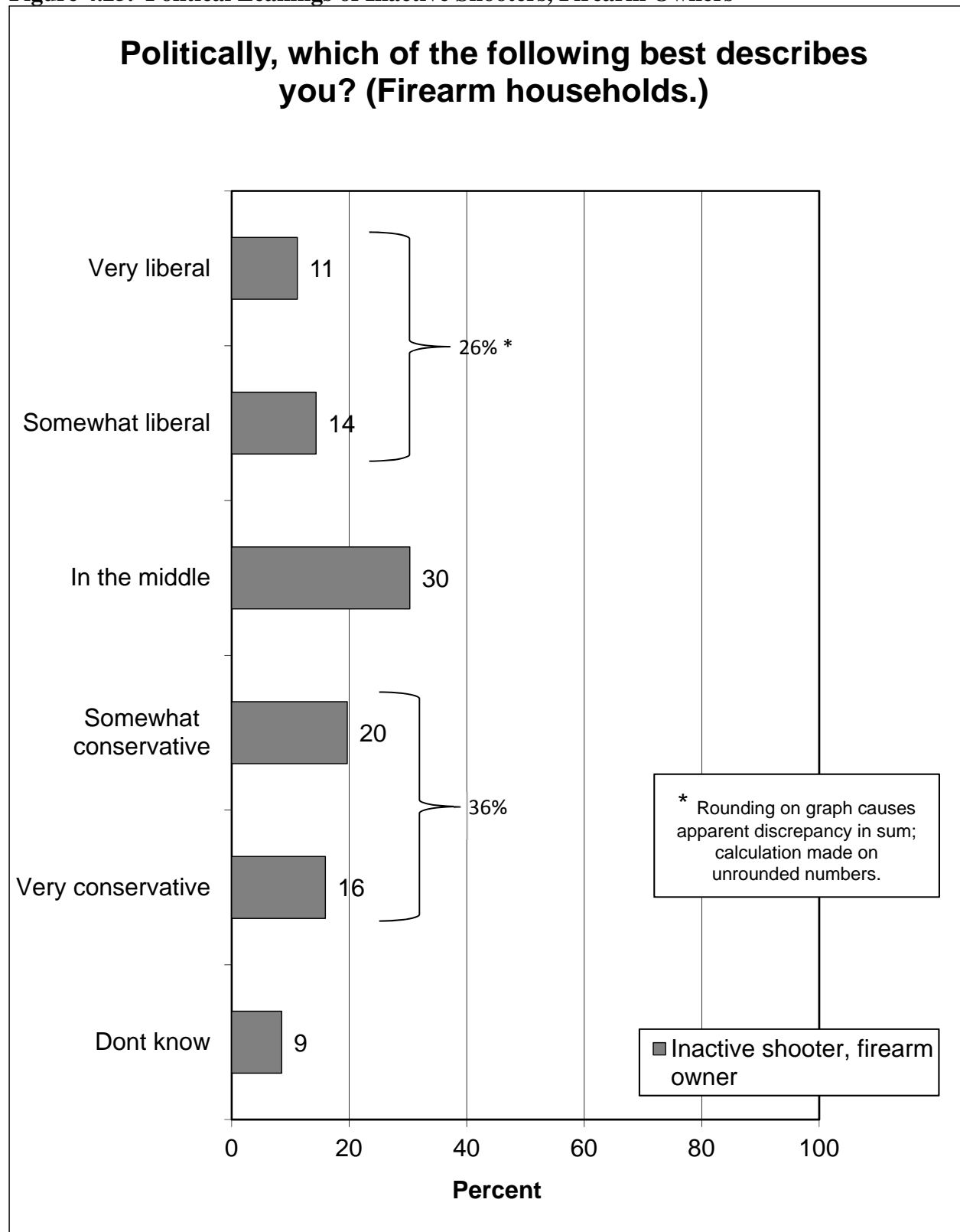
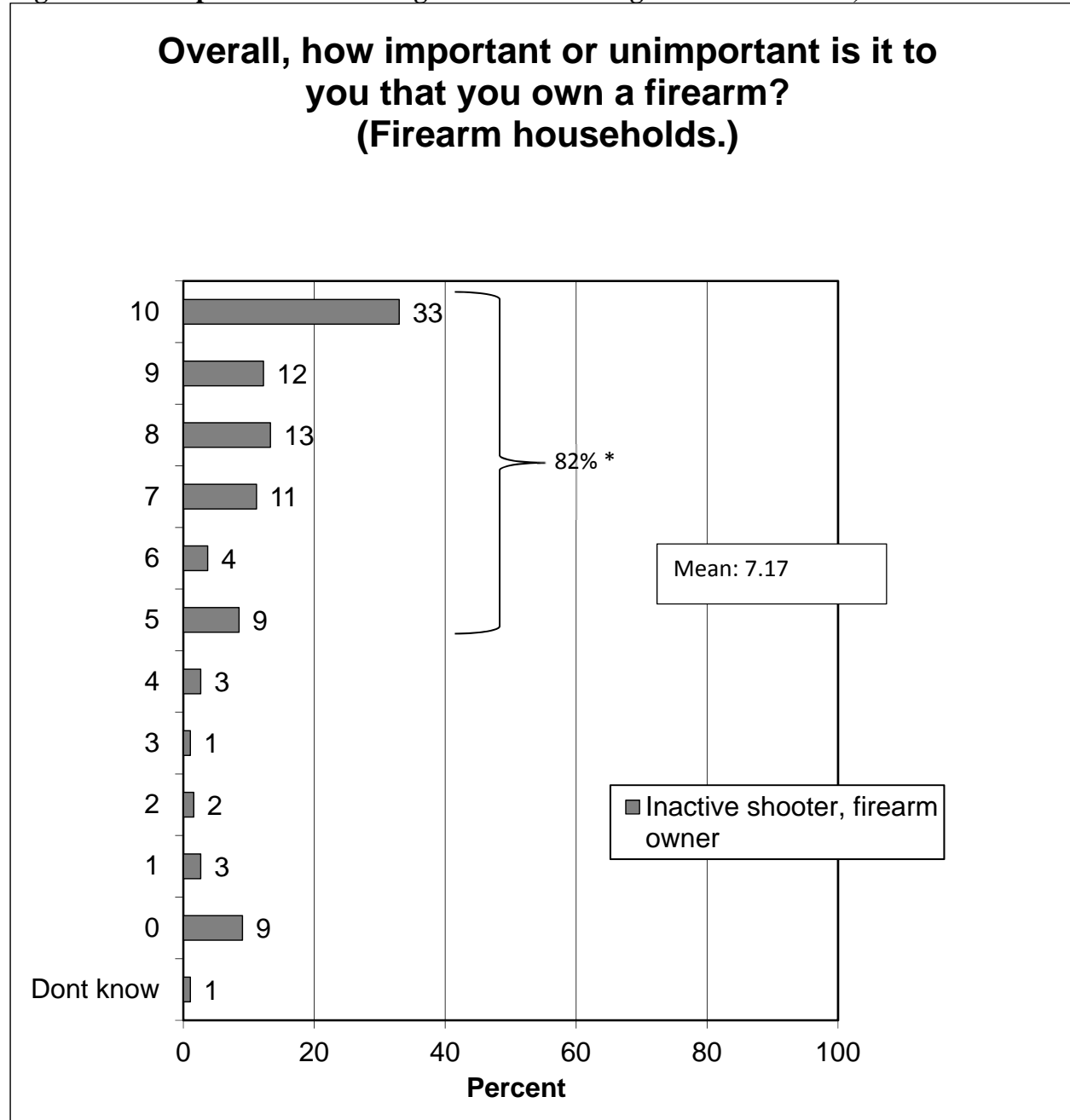
Figure 4.23. Residential Area in Which Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners, Grew Up**Figure 4.24. Length of Time Owning a Firearm Among Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners**

Figure 4.25. Political Leanings of Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners

Motivations for Acquiring Firearms and How They Were Acquired (Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners)

- Inactive shooters, despite being inactive, still give relatively high ratings to the importance of owning a firearm.
 - Among firearm owners who are *inactive*, a third nonetheless rate the importance of owning a firearm at “10” (on a 0 to 10 scale), and the overwhelming majority (82%) give a rating of the midpoint or higher (Figure 4.26). The mean is 7.17.

Figure 4.26. Importance of Owning a Firearm Among Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners



- **Handguns predominate as the types of firearms owned among this group (inactive shooter, firearm owners)—the majority own a handgun.**
 - The most common firearm owned is a modern handgun (60%), followed by a modern rifle (41%) and a modern shotgun (34%) (Figure 4.27).
 - Among rifle owners, 25% have at least one AR-platform rifle (Figure 4.28).

Figure 4.27. Types of Firearms Owned Among Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners

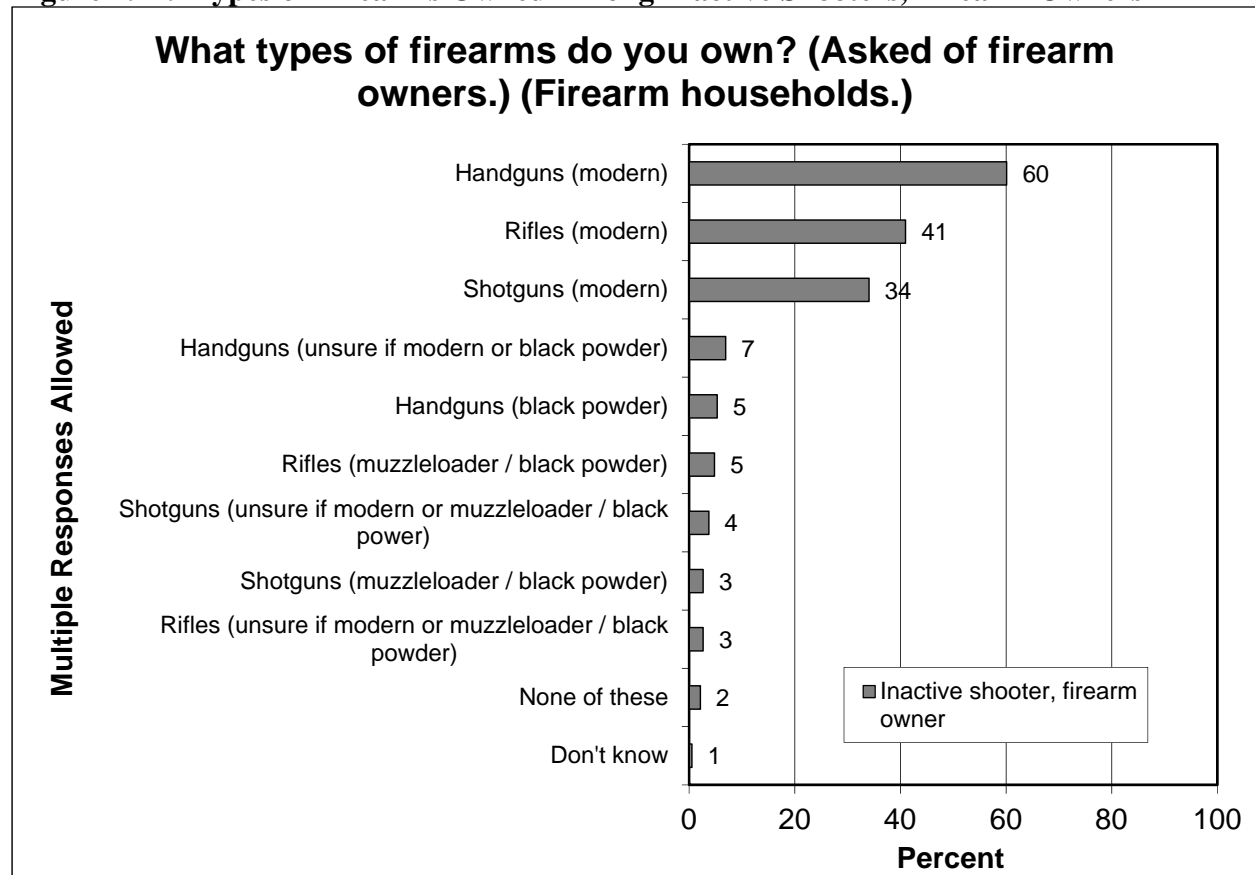
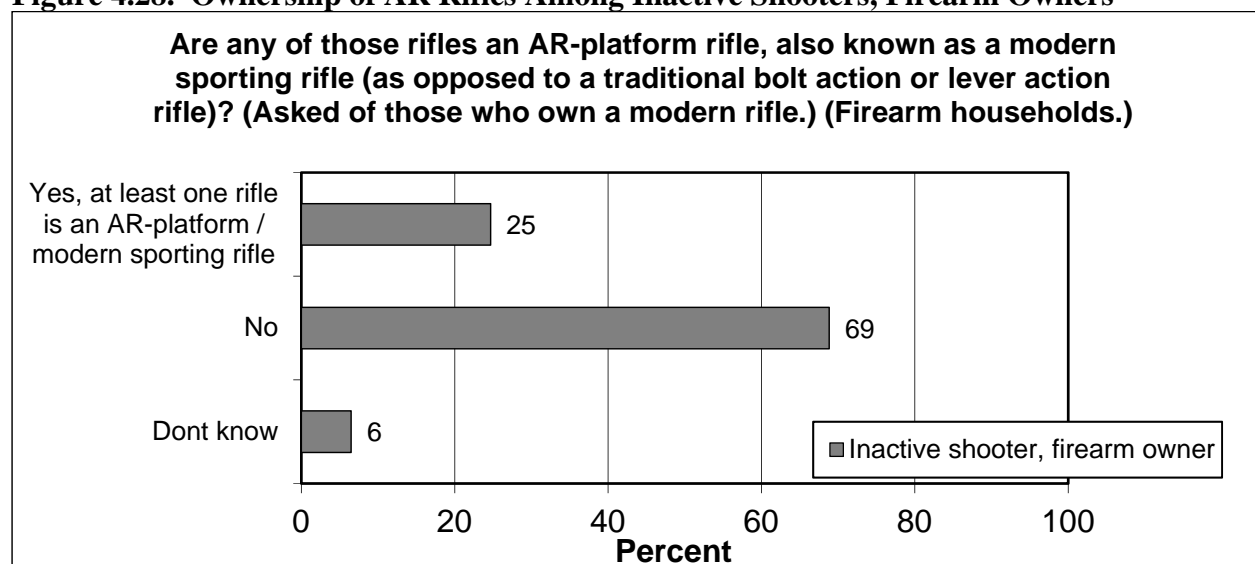


Figure 4.28. Ownership of AR Rifles Among Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners



- **By purchase is the most common way that inactive shooters acquired their firearms.**
- The majority of inactive shooters who own a firearm had purchased at least one of their firearms (60%), although robust percentages had inherited (32%) or had been given (31%) a firearm (Figure 4.29). Further analysis finds that 38% of this group had gotten all of their firearms either through gift or inheritance (i.e., did not purchase any).
 - Those who were given firearms overwhelmingly had parents give them firearms (63% from fathers, and 19% from mothers—the top two on the list) (Figure 4.30).

Figure 4.29. How Firearms Acquired Among Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners

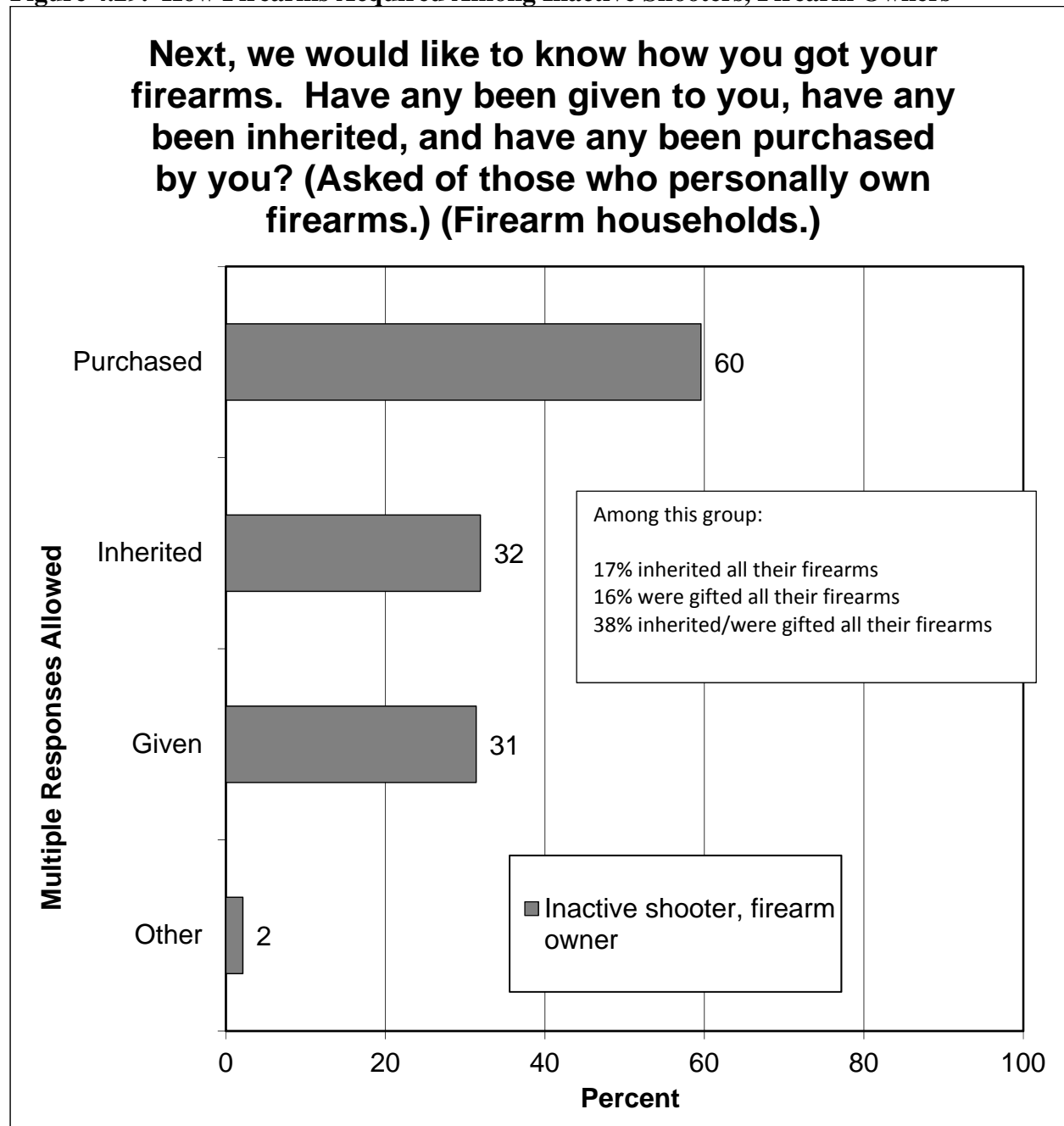
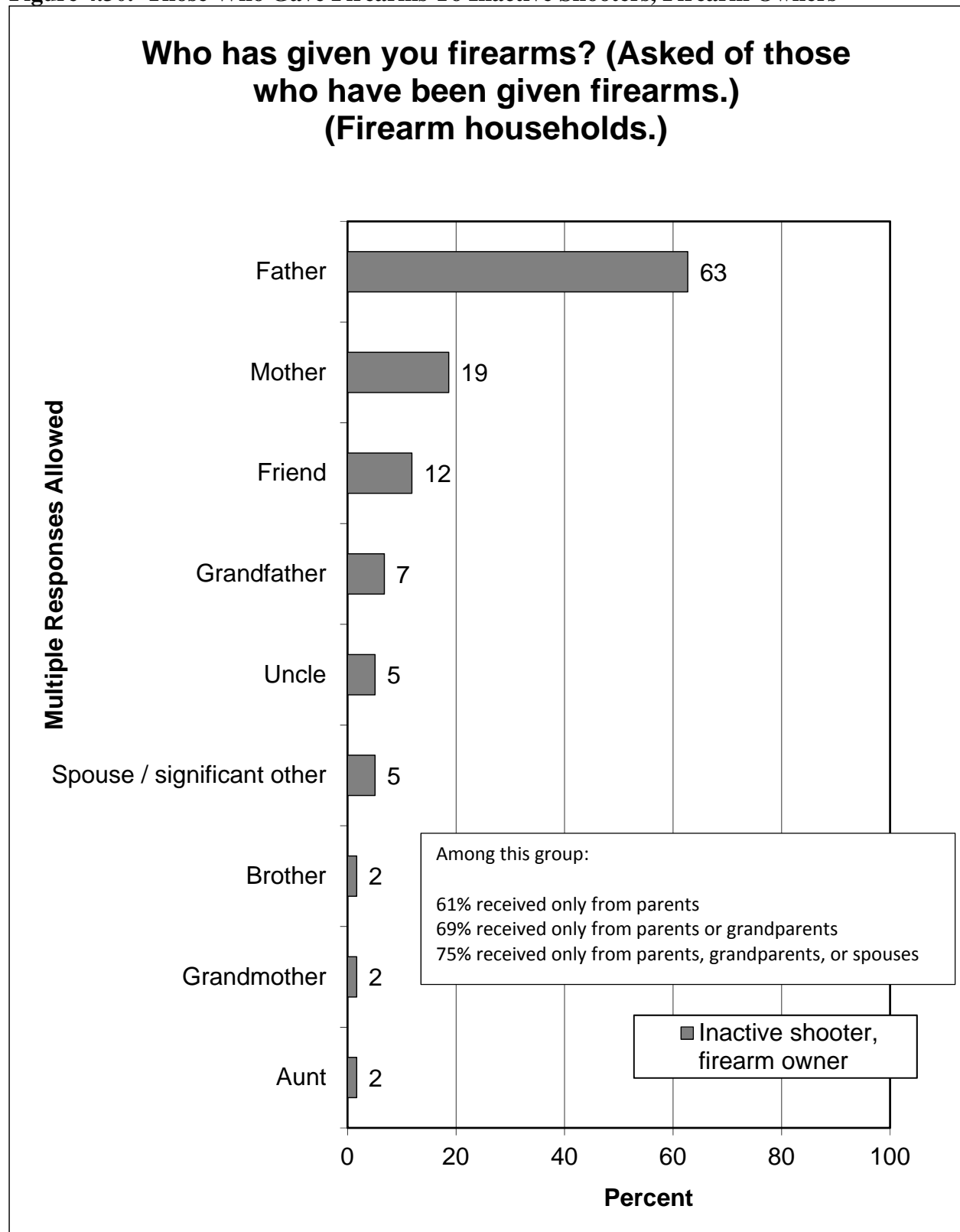
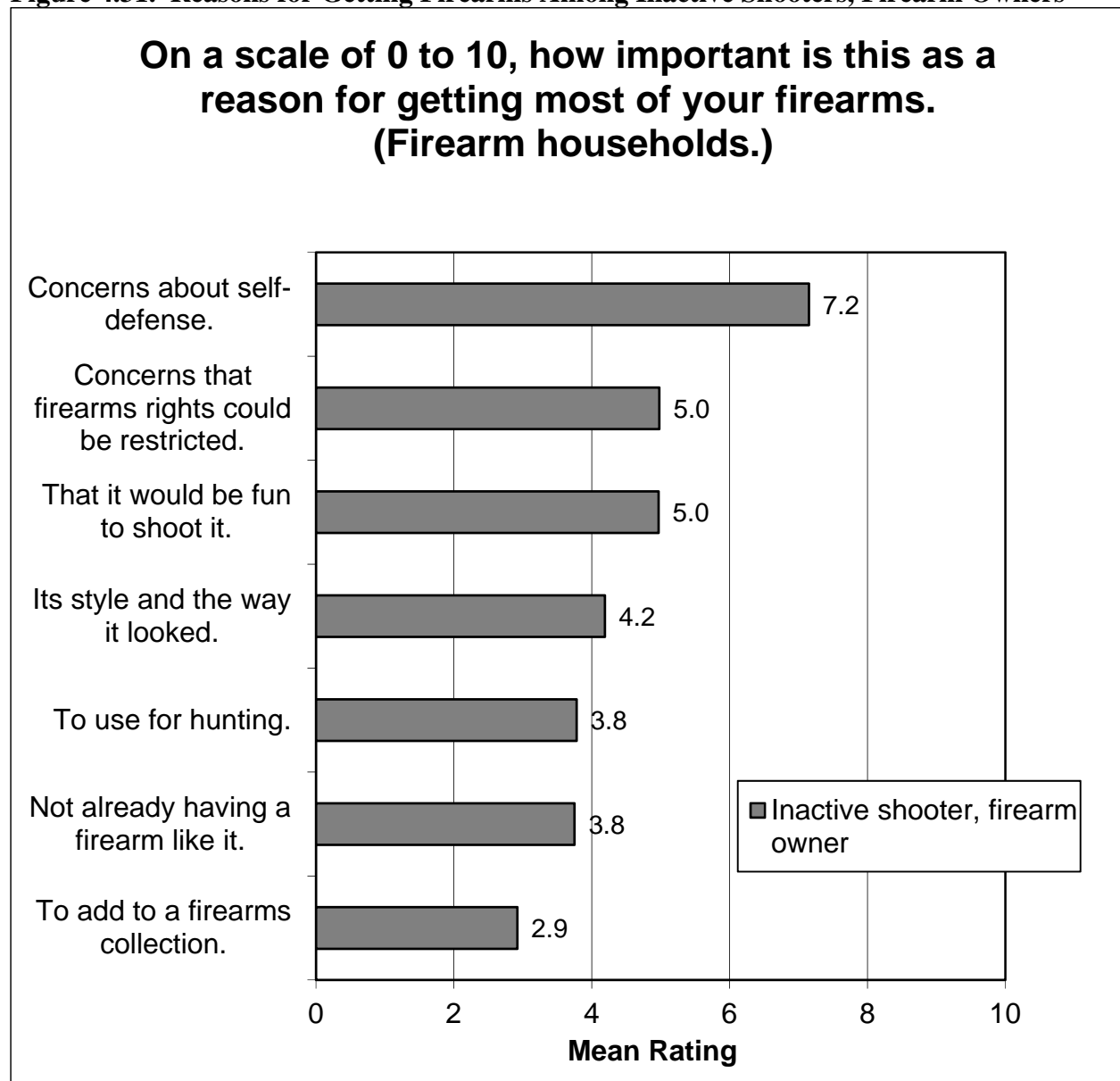


Figure 4.30. Those Who Gave Firearms To Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners

Another line of questioning in this section presented a list of possible motivations for getting a firearm. For each, the survey asked respondents to rate the importance of the motivation as a reason that they personally obtained most of their firearms, using a 0 to 10 scale, with 10 being the most important.

- **Self-defense and firearm rights are at the top as motivations for getting a firearm among these inactive shooters, along with the simple fun of shooting the firearm.**
- The mean rating of the importance of self-defense as a motive is at 7.2 (on a scale of 0 to 10, with 10 being the most important)—the top motive by far (Figure 4.31). At the midpoint (5.0) are firearm rights and that it would be fun to shoot the firearm. At the bottom are the reasons related to collecting.

Figure 4.31. Reasons for Getting Firearms Among Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners



Interest in Sport Shooting and Opinions on Strategies To Encourage Interest (Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners)

- Among firearm owning inactive shooters, interest in going shooting is middling.
 - Only about a quarter (24%) rate their interest as a “9” or “10”; more than a third (34%) give a rating of the midpoint or lower, showing tepid interest (Figure 4.32).
 - The most interest is in target shooting (the three top activities), particularly target shooting with a handgun (66% are interested) or a rifle (47%) (Figure 4.33).

Figure 4.32. Interest in Shooting Among Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners

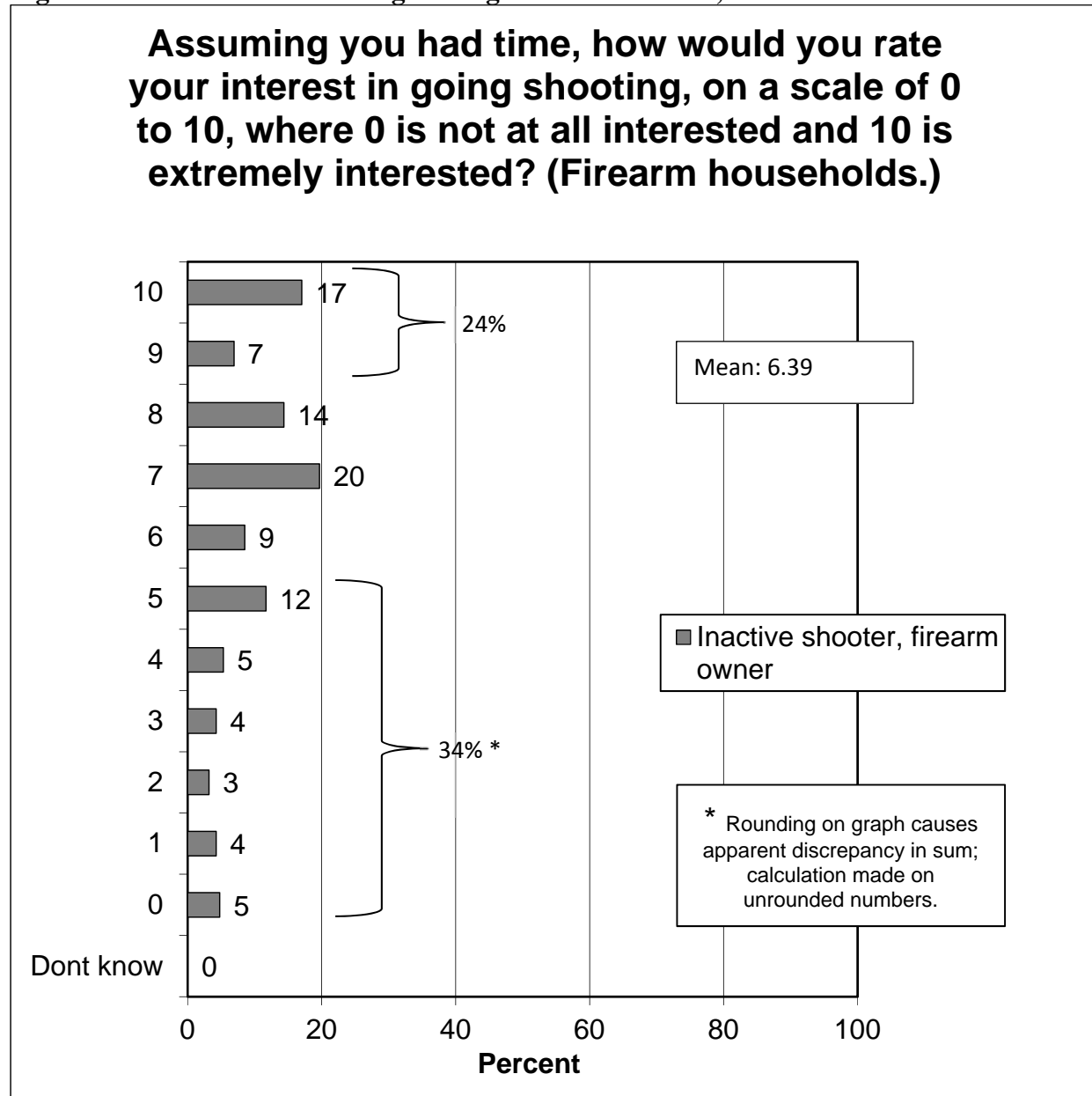
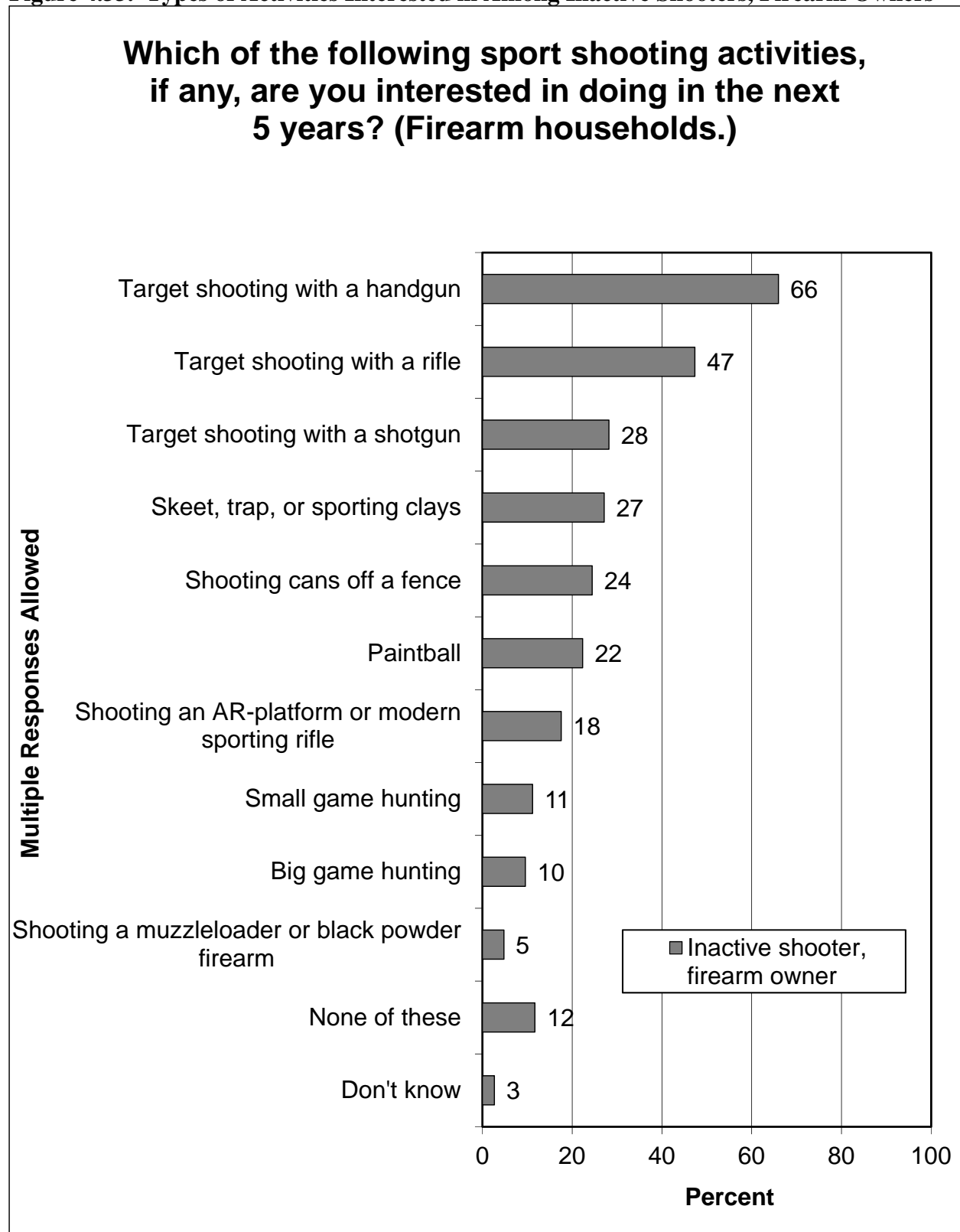


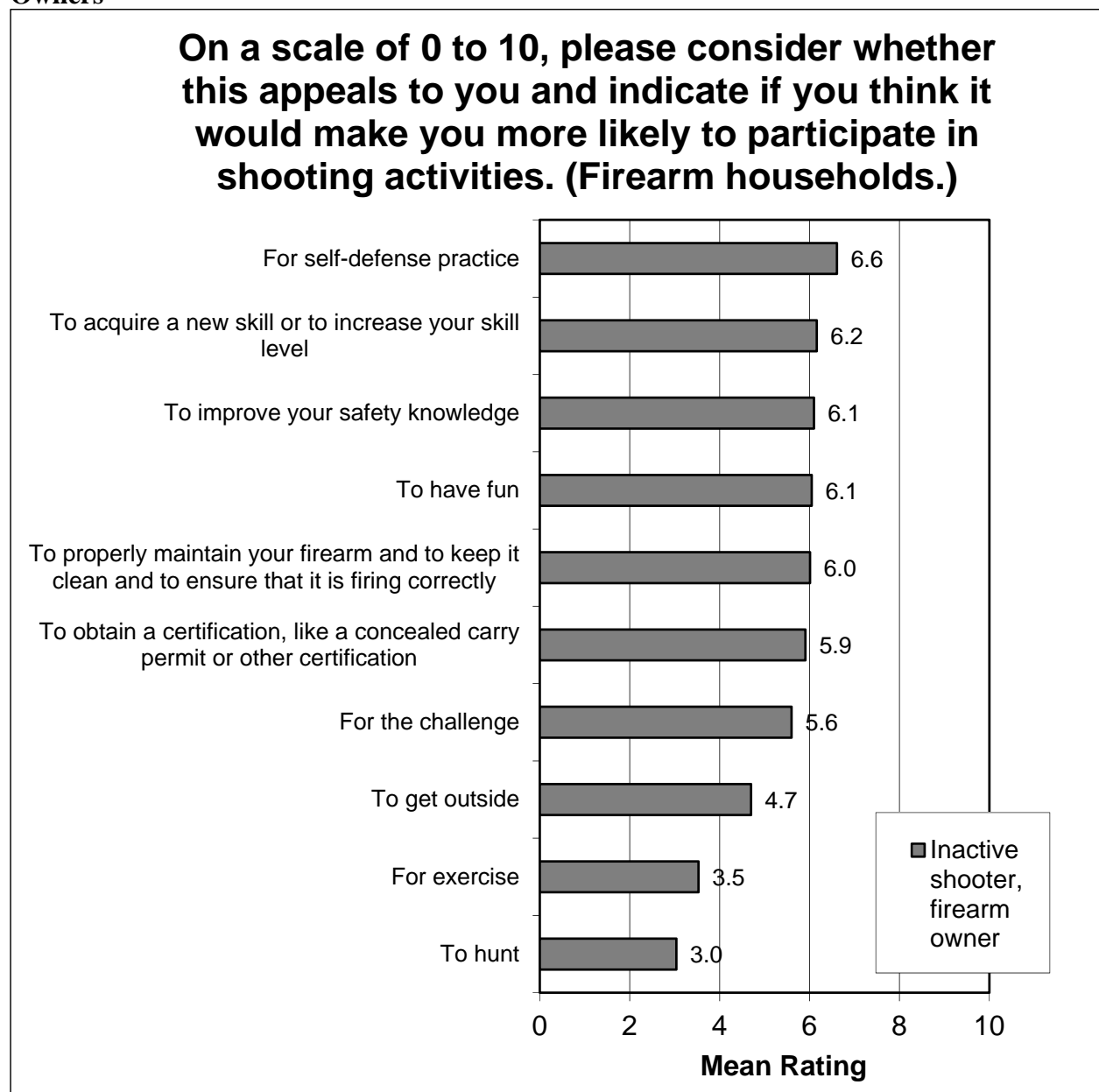
Figure 4.33. Types of Activities Interested in Among Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners

A list of reasons that might encourage sport shooting participation were presented to those who had not gone sport shooting in the previous 5 years. For each, respondents gave a rating from 0 to 10, where 0 was that it would have no effect at all and 10 was that it would make the respondent much more likely to go sport shooting.

➤ **Self-defense practice or to improve skills and knowledge would be the primary motivations to encourage this group to go sport shooting.**

- Self-defense practice was the reason at the top (although no reason had a mean rating higher than 6.6), with to increase skill (mean of 6.2), to acquire knowledge (6.1), and to have fun (also 6.1) just behind that top reason (Figure 4.34).

Figure 4.34. Motivations to Encourage Participation Among Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners



Another list was presented to respondents of incentives to encourage sport shooting participation. For each, respondents indicated whether it would make them much more interested, somewhat more interested, or a little more interested in going sport shooting, or whether it would not affect their interest level at all.

➤ **Free firearms training at a range and knowing that effective self-defense takes practice are the two incentives at the top of the list for those firearm owners who are inactive shooters.**

- Among this group, 45% said it would make them much more interested in shooting if there was a range that offered free firearms training, and 39% said the same about knowing that effective self-defense requires regular practice (Figure 4.35). These two had a notably higher percentage than the rest.
- At the bottom for this group are the incentives of having the range be more family-friendly (only 19%), having a group or family discount at a range (18%), or being able to learn to hunt (14%).
 - Three graphs are shown: the percentage saying that the incentives would make them much more likely (Figure 4.35); the percentage saying that the incentives would make them much, somewhat, or a little more likely (Figure 4.36); and the percentage saying that the incentives would not affect their interest at all (Figure 4.37).

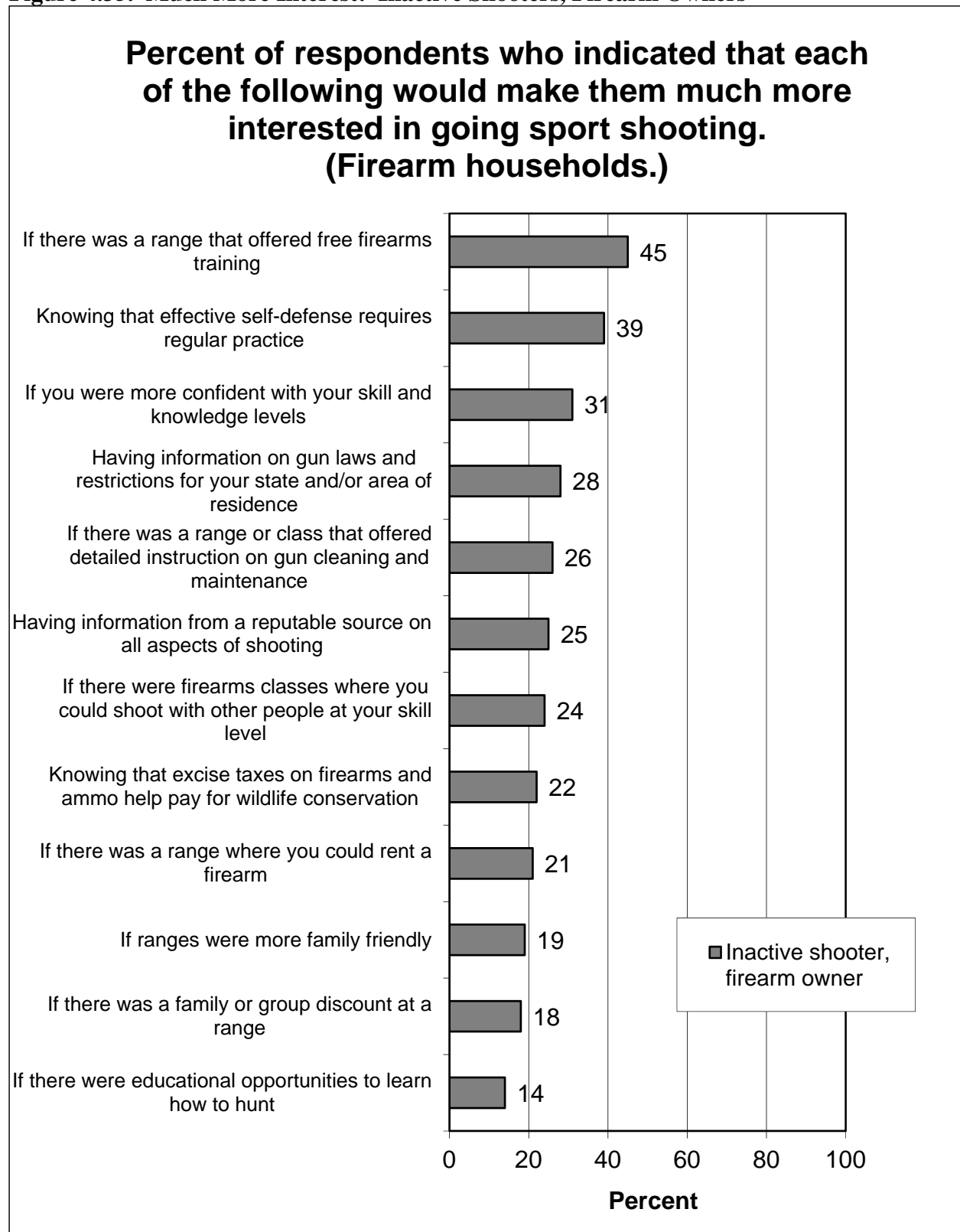
Figure 4.35. Much More Interest: Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners

Figure 4.36. Much More, Somewhat More, or a Little More Interest: Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners

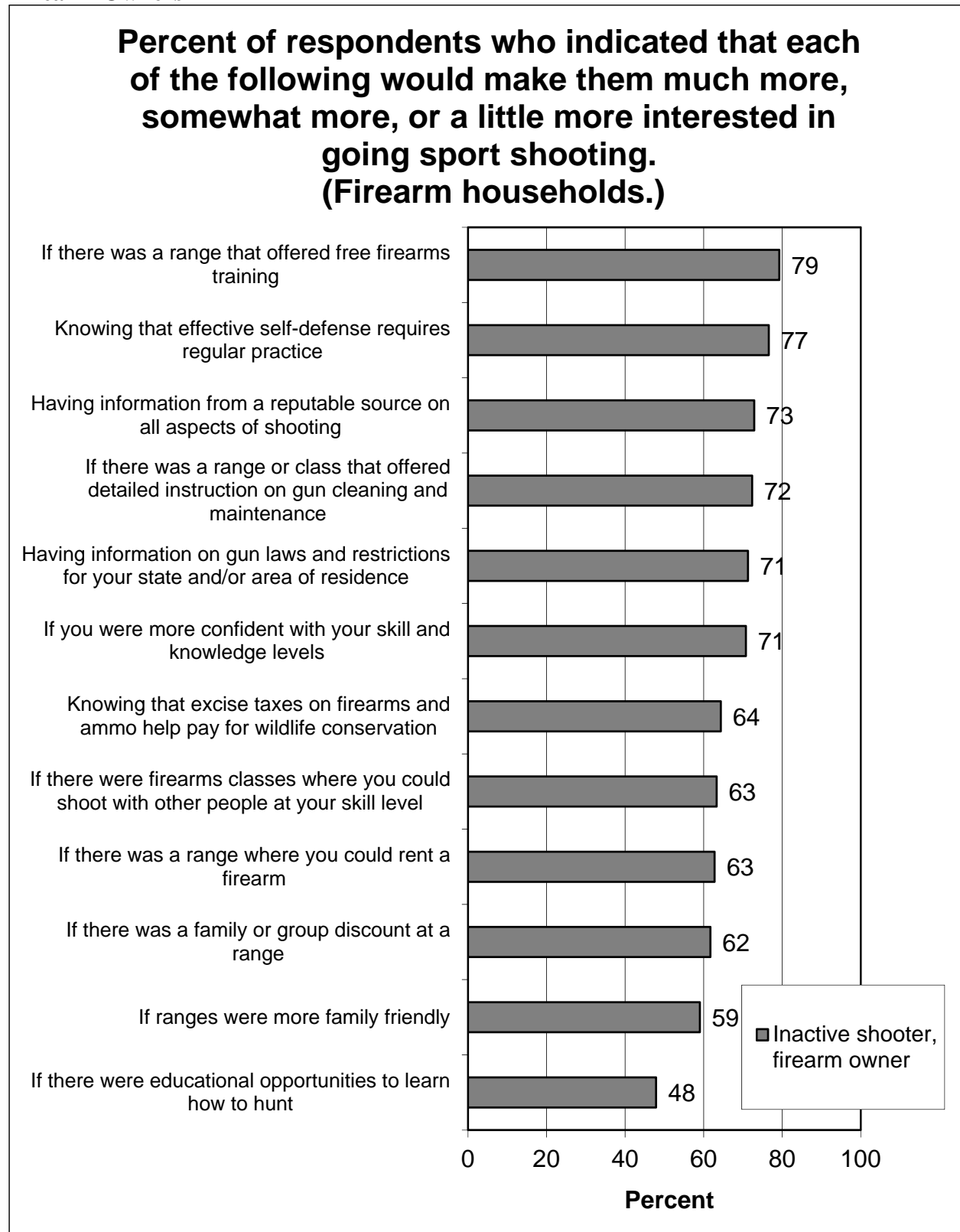
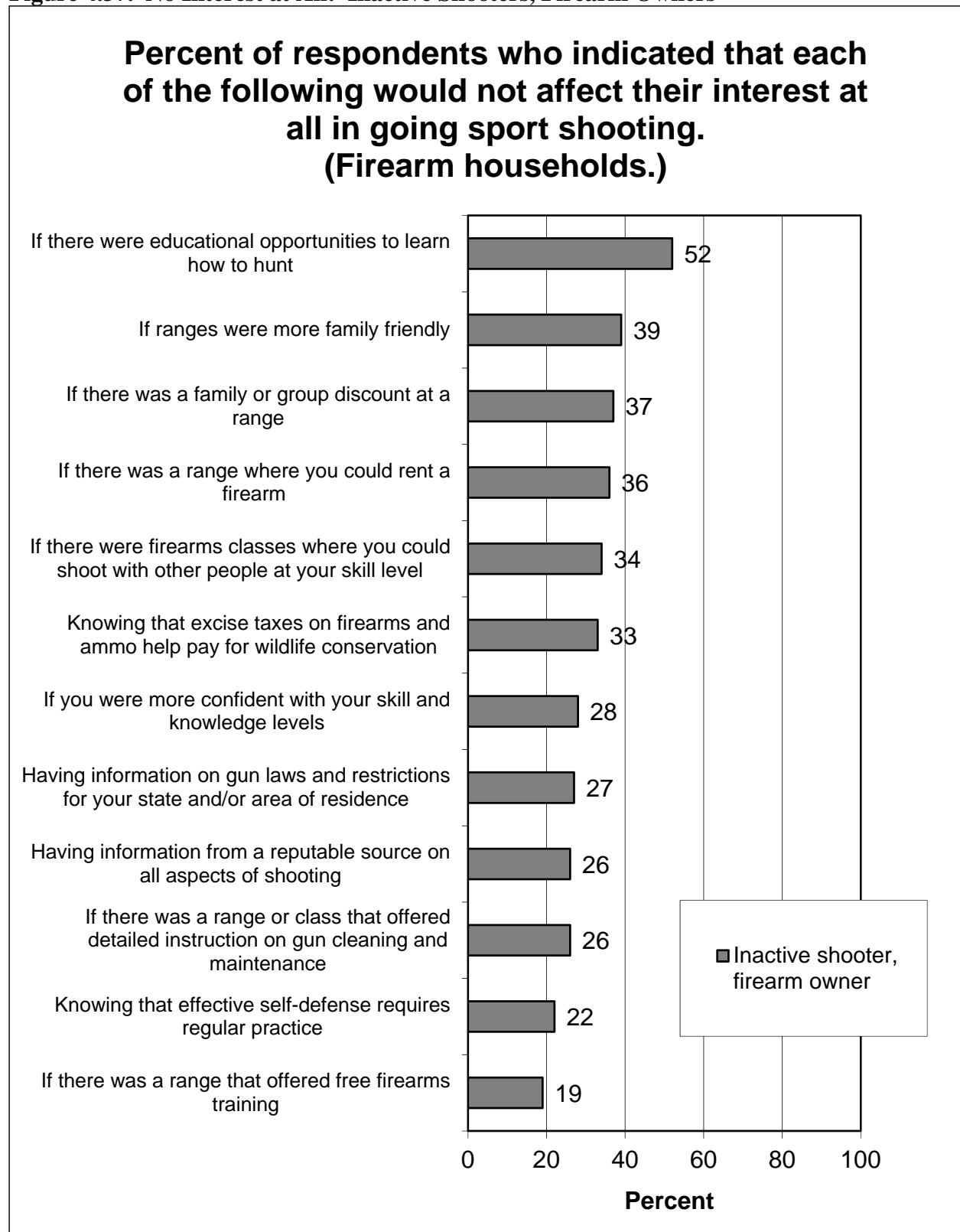


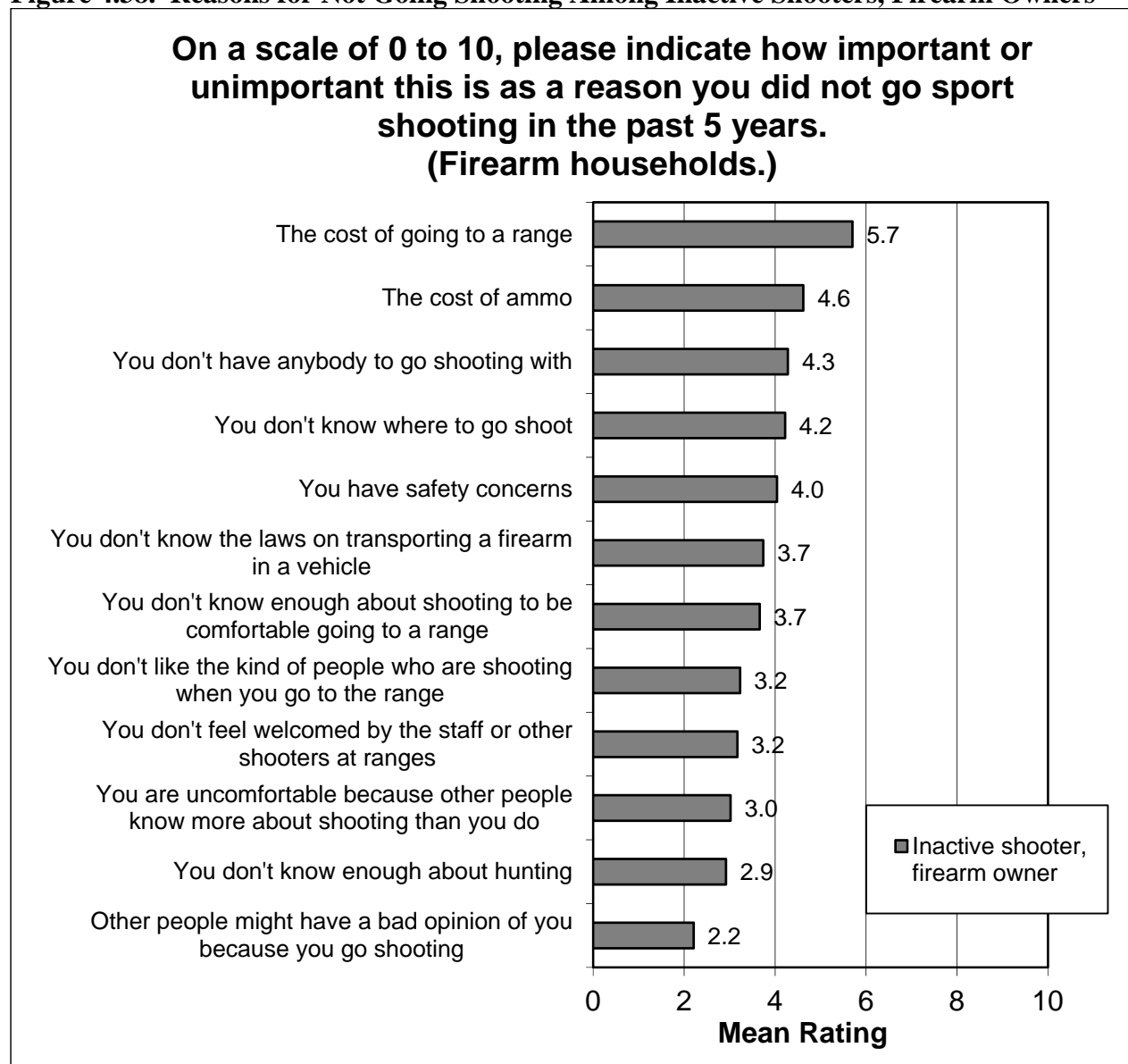
Figure 4.37. No Interest at All: Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners

Constraints To Sport Shooting Participation (Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners)

Another series that used a rating of 0 to 10 asked respondents to rate the importance of various potential reasons for *not* going sport shooting, among those who did *not* go in the previous 5 years.

- **Costs are the biggest constraint, taking the top two spots in the ranking: the cost of going to a range and the cost of ammo. Also of importance as constraints are not having anybody to go shooting with and not knowing where to shoot.**
 - The cost of going to a range (mean rating of 5.7) was the top constraint by far (Figure 4.38). Next was the cost of ammo (4.6). Rounding out those constraints at a mean of 4.0 or higher are not having anybody to go with (4.3), not knowing where to go (4.2), and safety concerns (4.0).

Figure 4.38. Reasons for Not Going Shooting Among Inactive Shooters, Firearm Owners



NON-PARTICIPANTS, FIREARM OWNERS

This section focuses on firearm owners who are non-participants. It looks at demographic characteristics, motivations, likely interest in shooting, and constraints to shooting among this group.

Demographic Characteristics and Data About *Non-Participants, Firearm Owners*

- **The following shows the demographic characteristics associated with this group. The typical firearm owner who is a non-participant is a male, younger, white, and urban or suburban; they are about evenly split between those with and those without children in their household.**
 - Firearm owners who are non-participants are made up mostly of males (61%) rather than females (39%) (Figure 4.39).
 - A relatively large proportion of this group is on the younger side: nearly a third (32%) are younger than 35 years (Figure 4.40). Their mean age is 42.86 years.
 - Members of this group are largely white (87%), with 7% being African-American, the next largest ethnic group (Figure 4.41).
 - The large majority are on the urban/suburban side: 39% live in a large city/urban area, and 32% live in a suburban area (this sums to 70%, when calculated on unrounded numbers) (Figure 4.42). At the other end, 16% are rural.
 - Slightly under half (48%) have a bachelor's degree (with or without a higher degree) (Figure 4.43).
 - About a fifth are retired (21%) (Figure 4.44). Common fields of occupation include finance, insurance, real estate (11% of those not retired), office, consulting, data analysis (8%), and retail/wholesale sales (7%) (Figure 4.45).
 - Finally, 44% of this group have minor children living at home (Figure 4.46), and more than half (53%) have any children (including adult children) living at home (Figure 4.47).
- **The large majority of this group grew up in a large city/urban area or a suburban area.**
 - The survey asked about the residential area in which the respondent grew up (Figure 4.48). The results match current living areas, with the majority being on the urban/suburban side of the continuum.
- **For the most part, these people have owned a firearm for 5 years or less—accounting for just about half of the entire group. About two-thirds have owned a firearm for 10 years or less.**
 - Just under half of this group have owned a firearm for 5 years or less (48%), and another 21% are in the 6 to 10 years range; only 15% have owned a firearm for more than 25 years (Figure 4.49).
- **Most commonly, this group is conservative, with still substantial percentages being liberal or in the middle.**
 - The political leanings are as follows among non-participants, firearm owners: 39% are conservative, 29% are liberal, and 28% are in the middle (Figure 4.50).

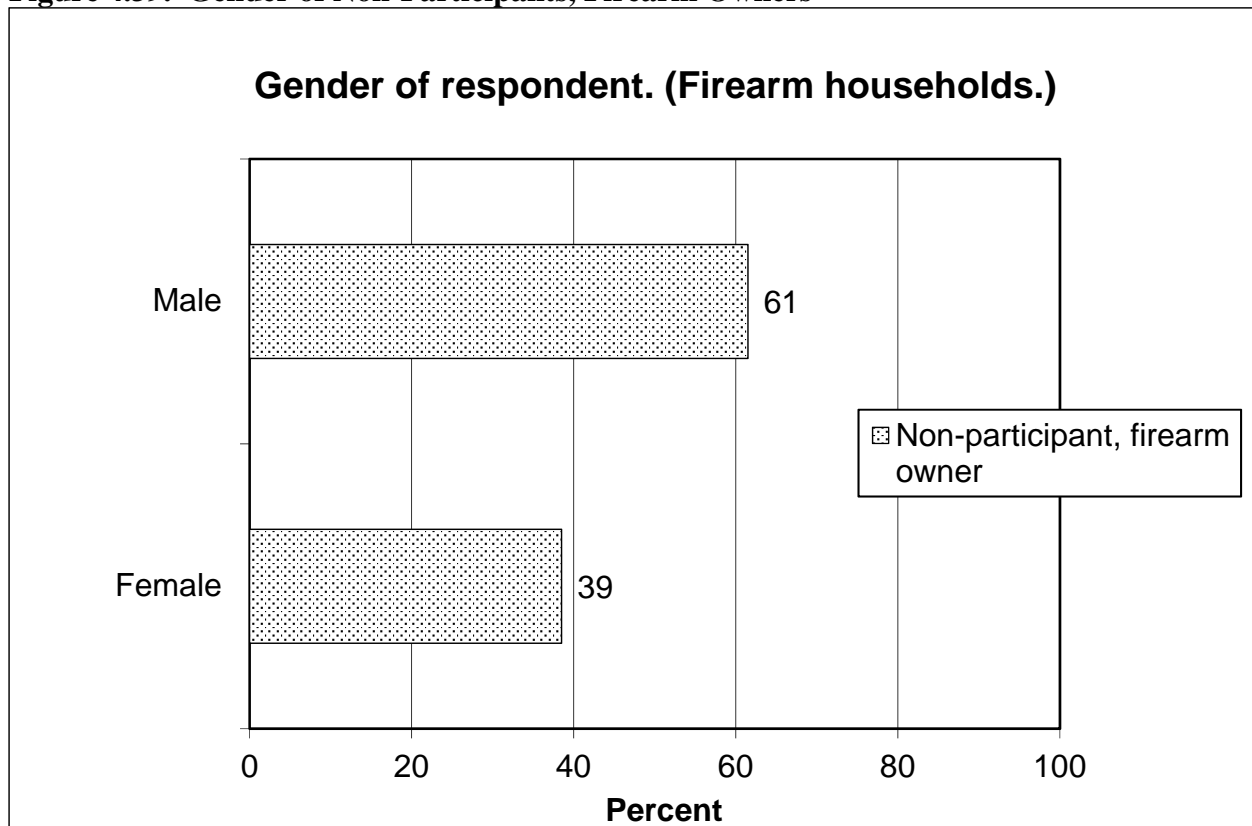
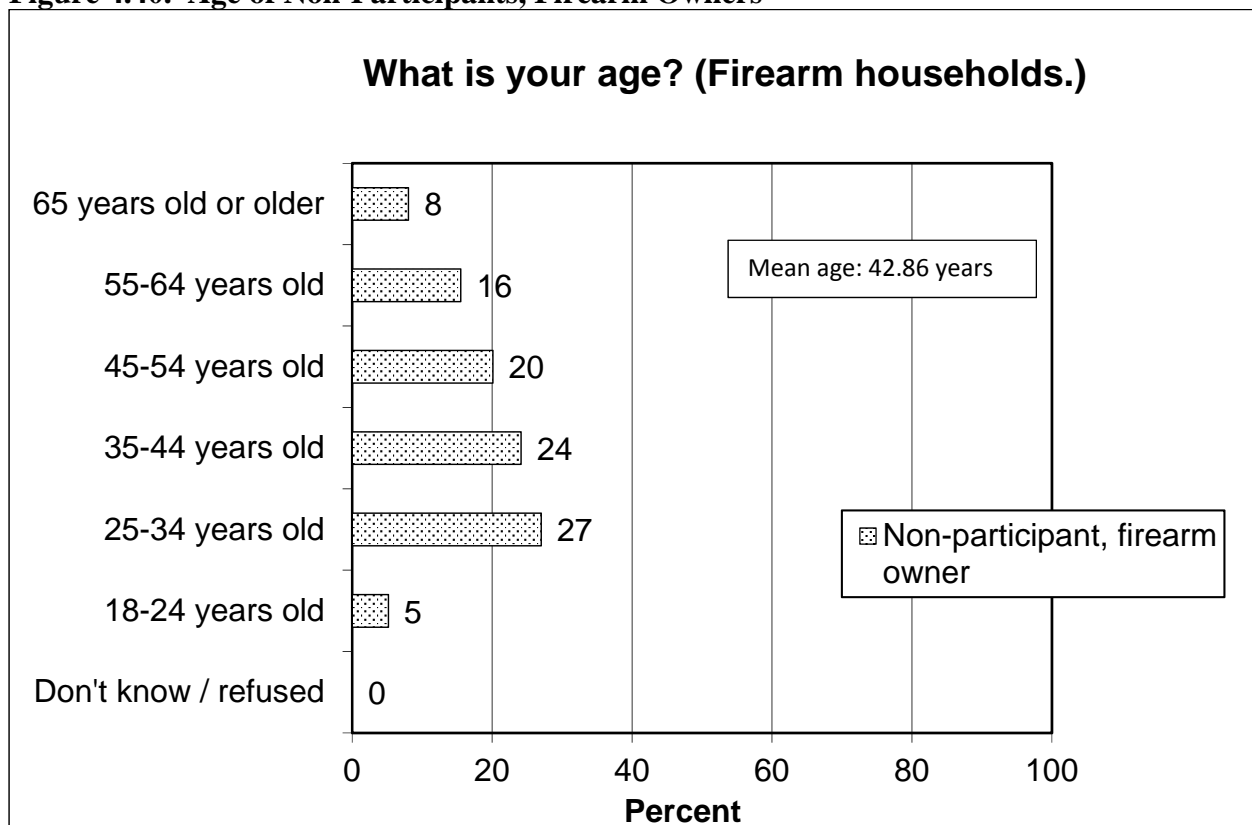
Figure 4.39. Gender of Non-Participants, Firearm Owners**Figure 4.40. Age of Non-Participants, Firearm Owners**

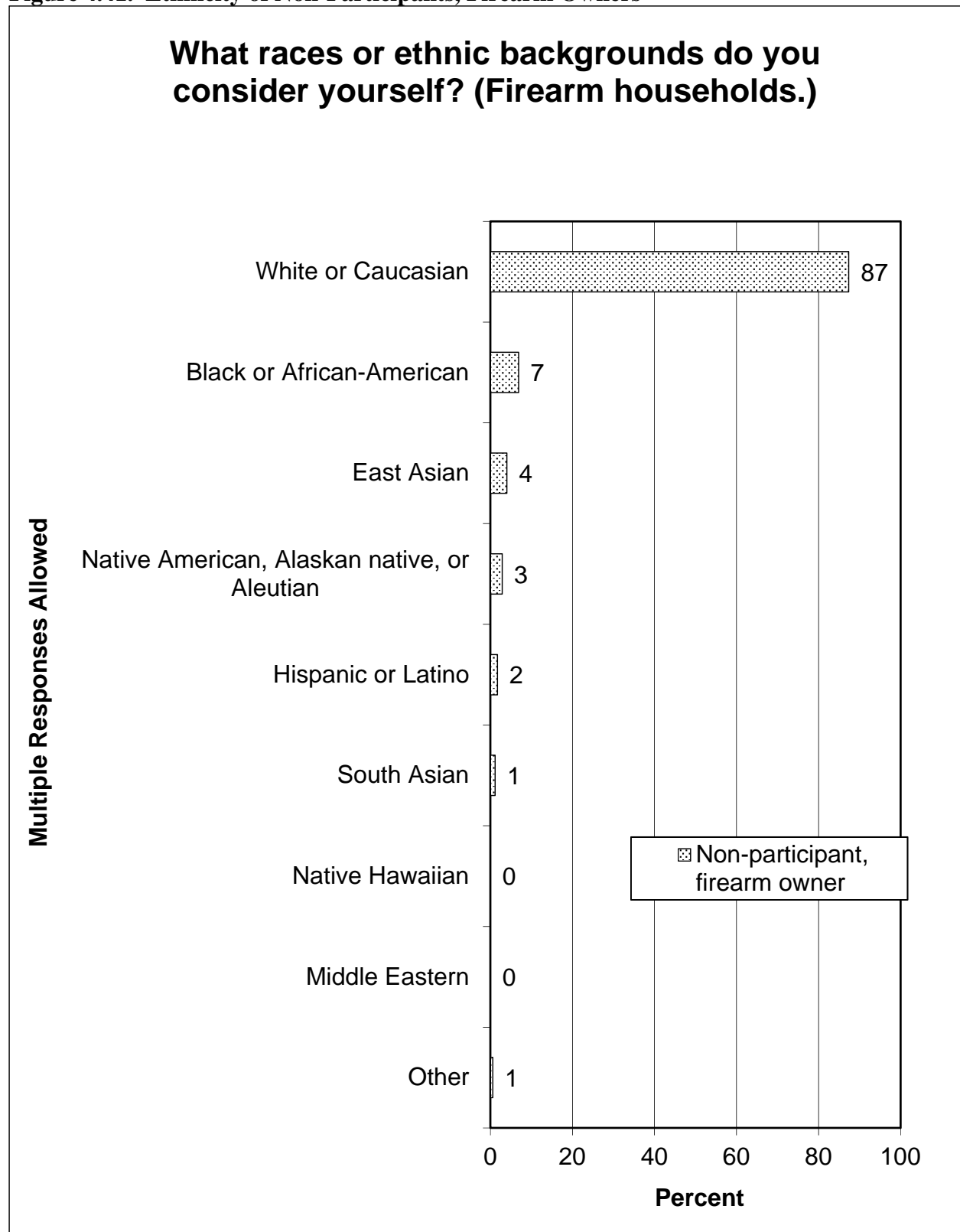
Figure 4.41. Ethnicity of Non-Participants, Firearm Owners

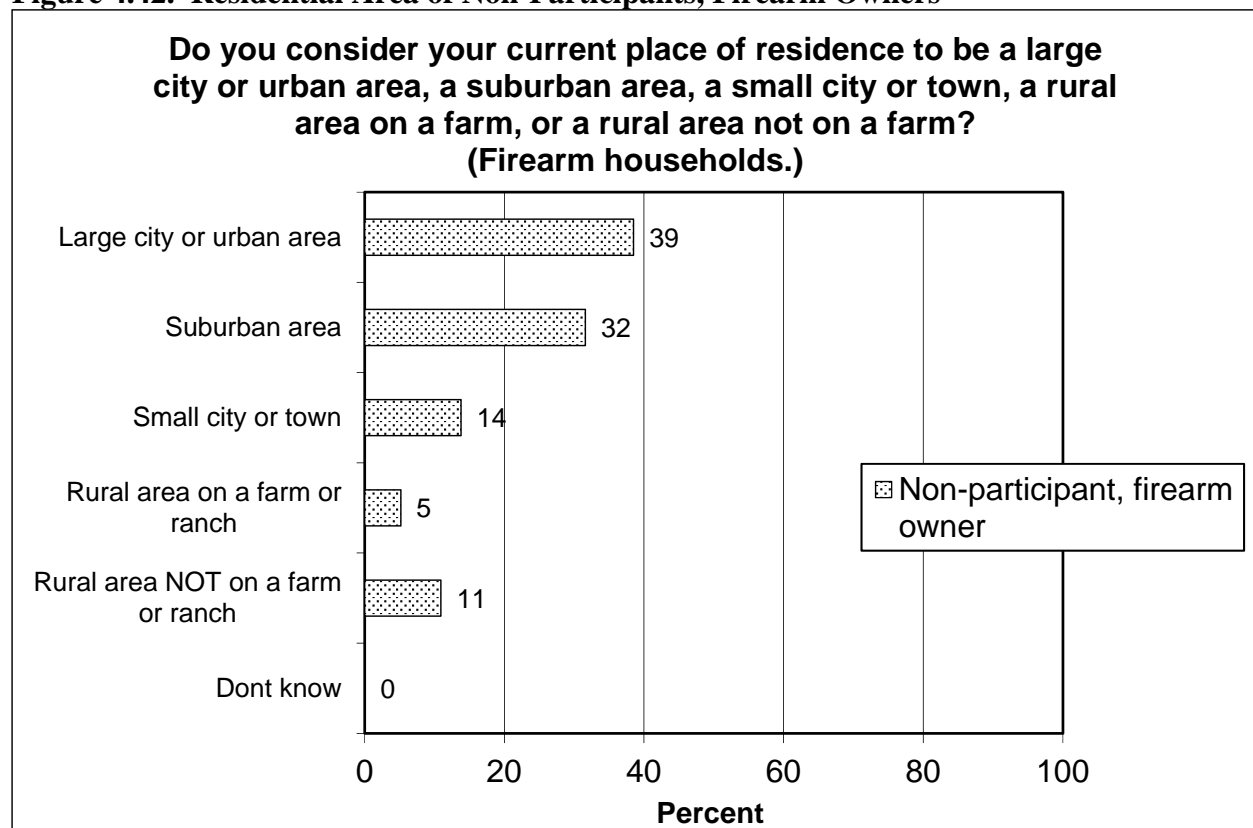
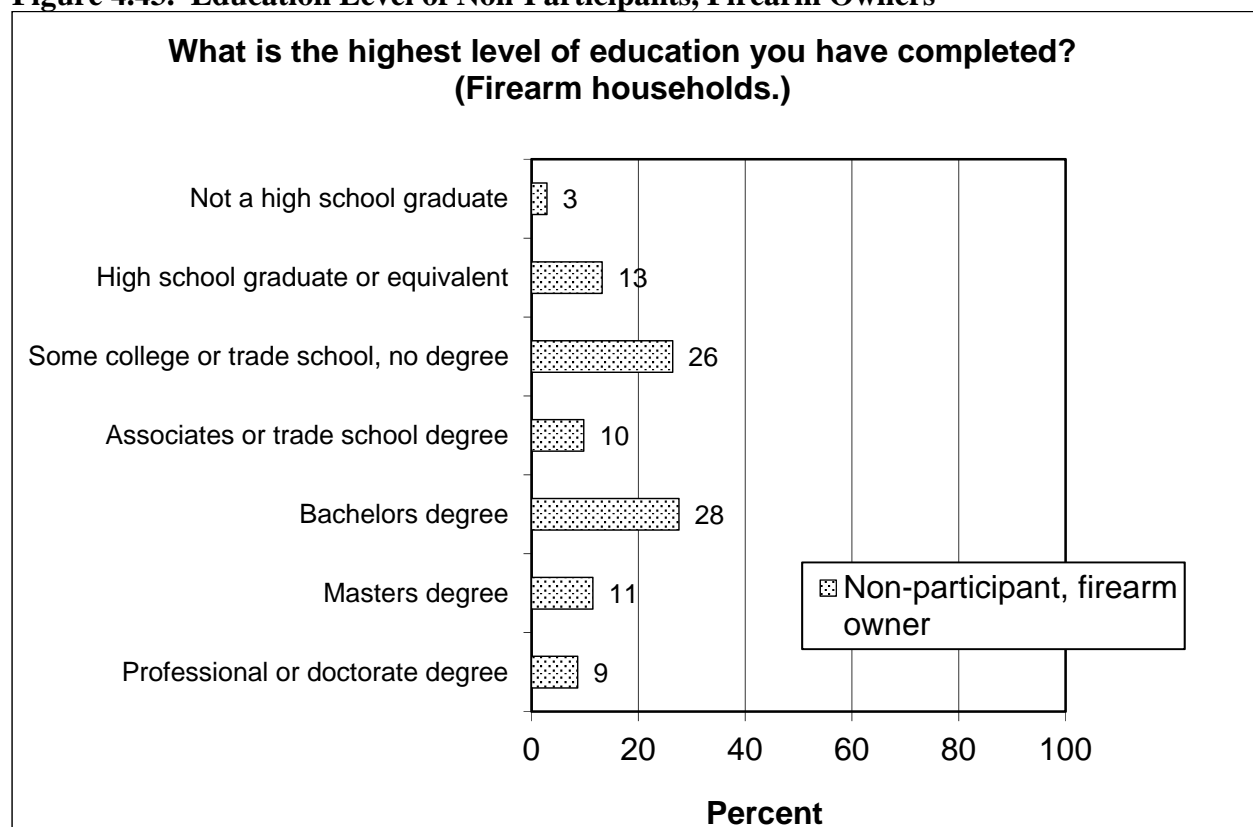
Figure 4.42. Residential Area of Non-Participants, Firearm Owners**Figure 4.43. Education Level of Non-Participants, Firearm Owners**

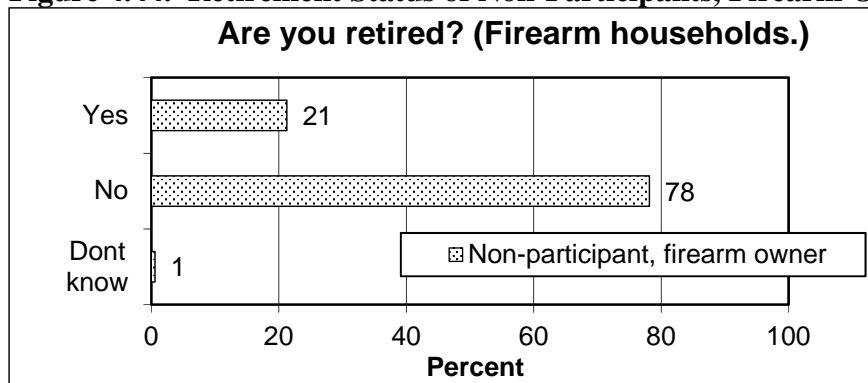
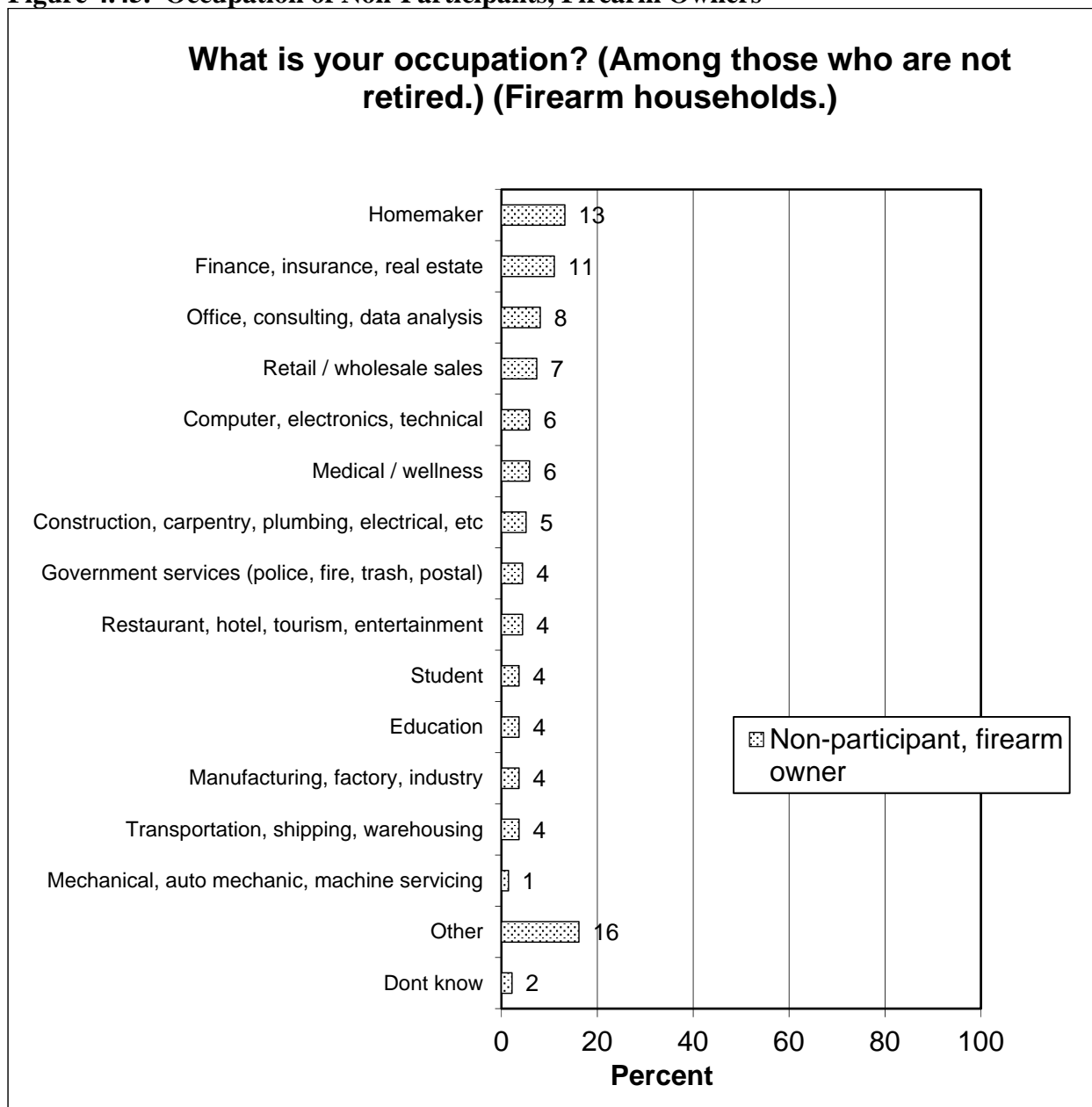
Figure 4.44. Retirement Status of Non-Participants, Firearm Owners**Figure 4.45. Occupation of Non-Participants, Firearm Owners**

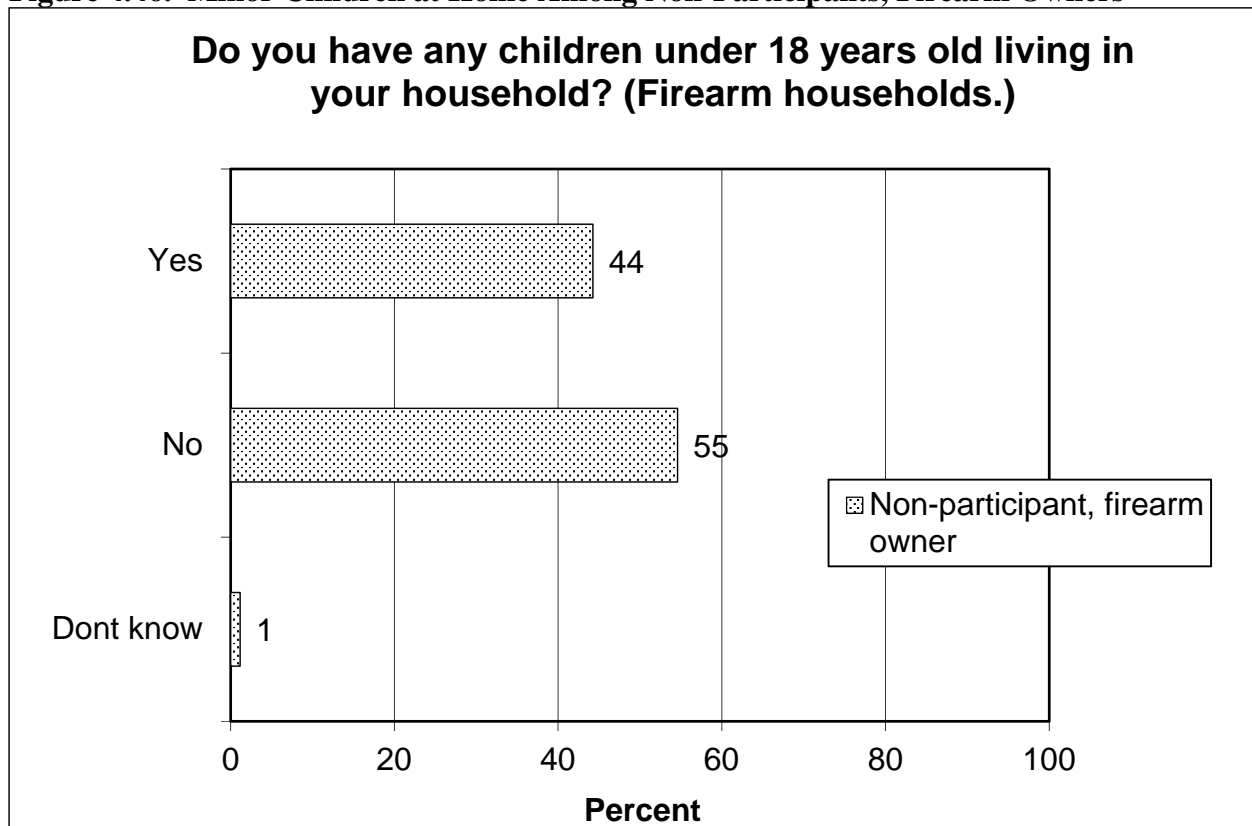
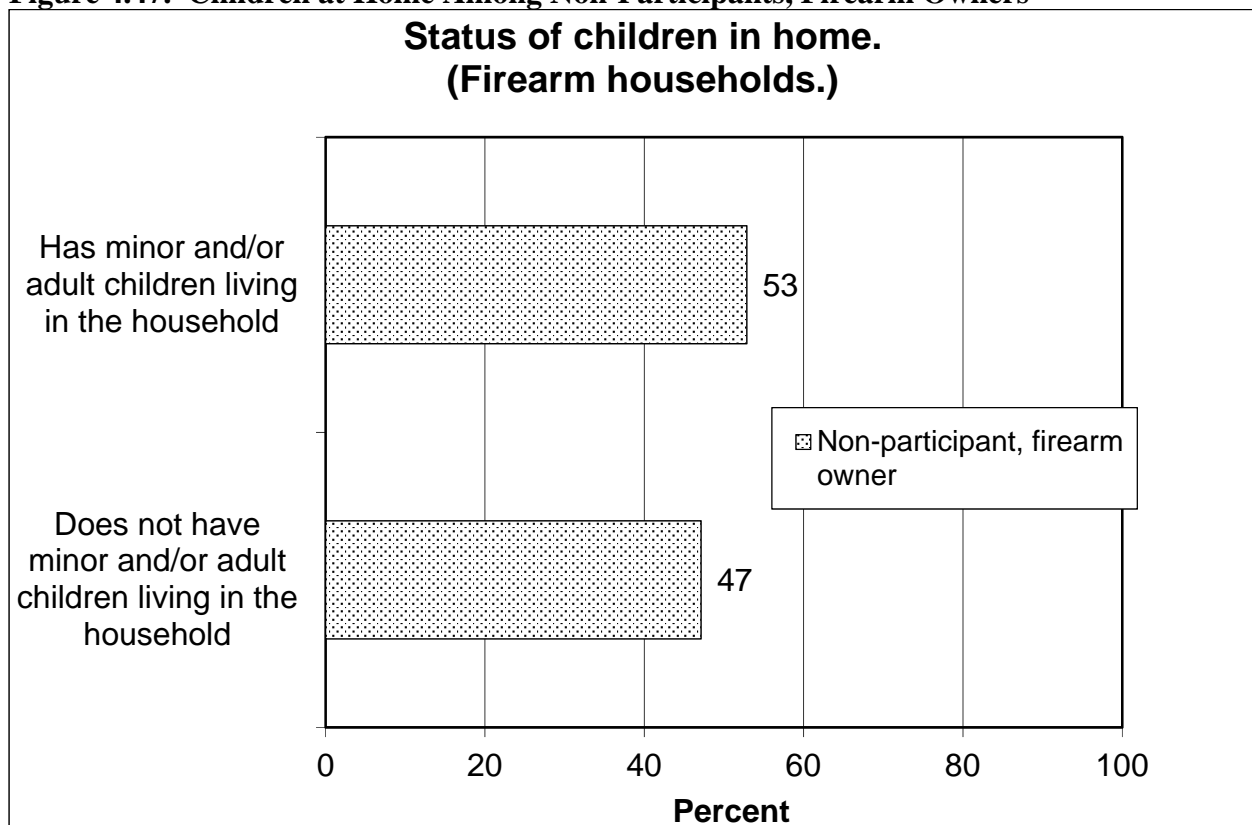
Figure 4.46. Minor Children at Home Among Non-Participants, Firearm Owners**Figure 4.47. Children at Home Among Non-Participants, Firearm Owners**

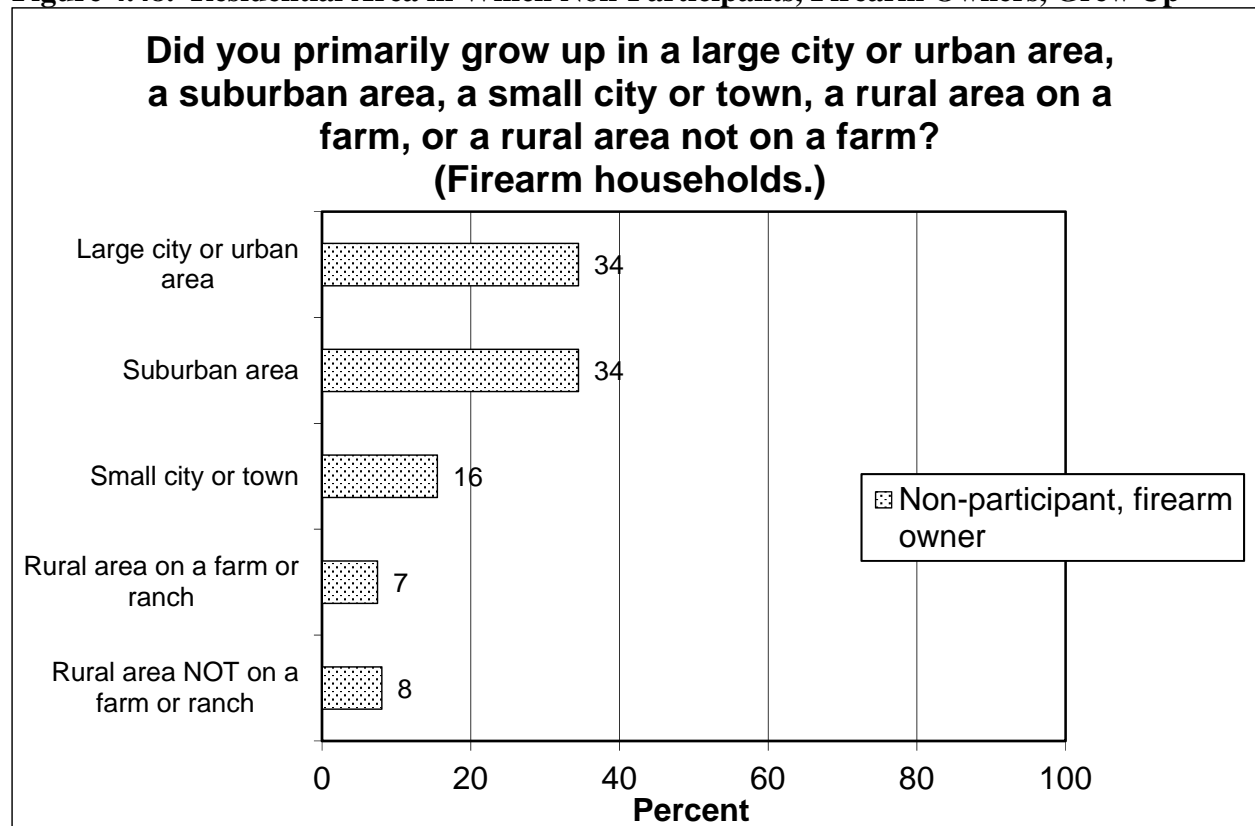
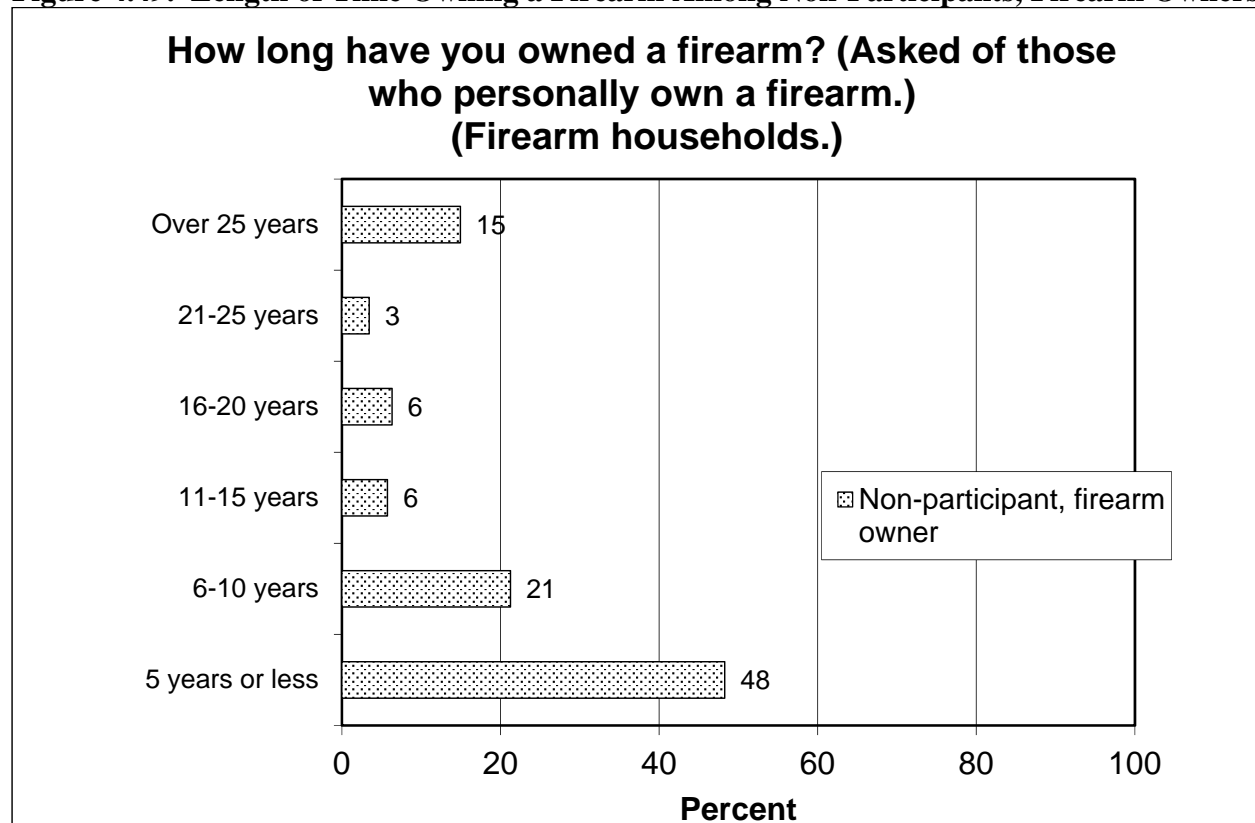
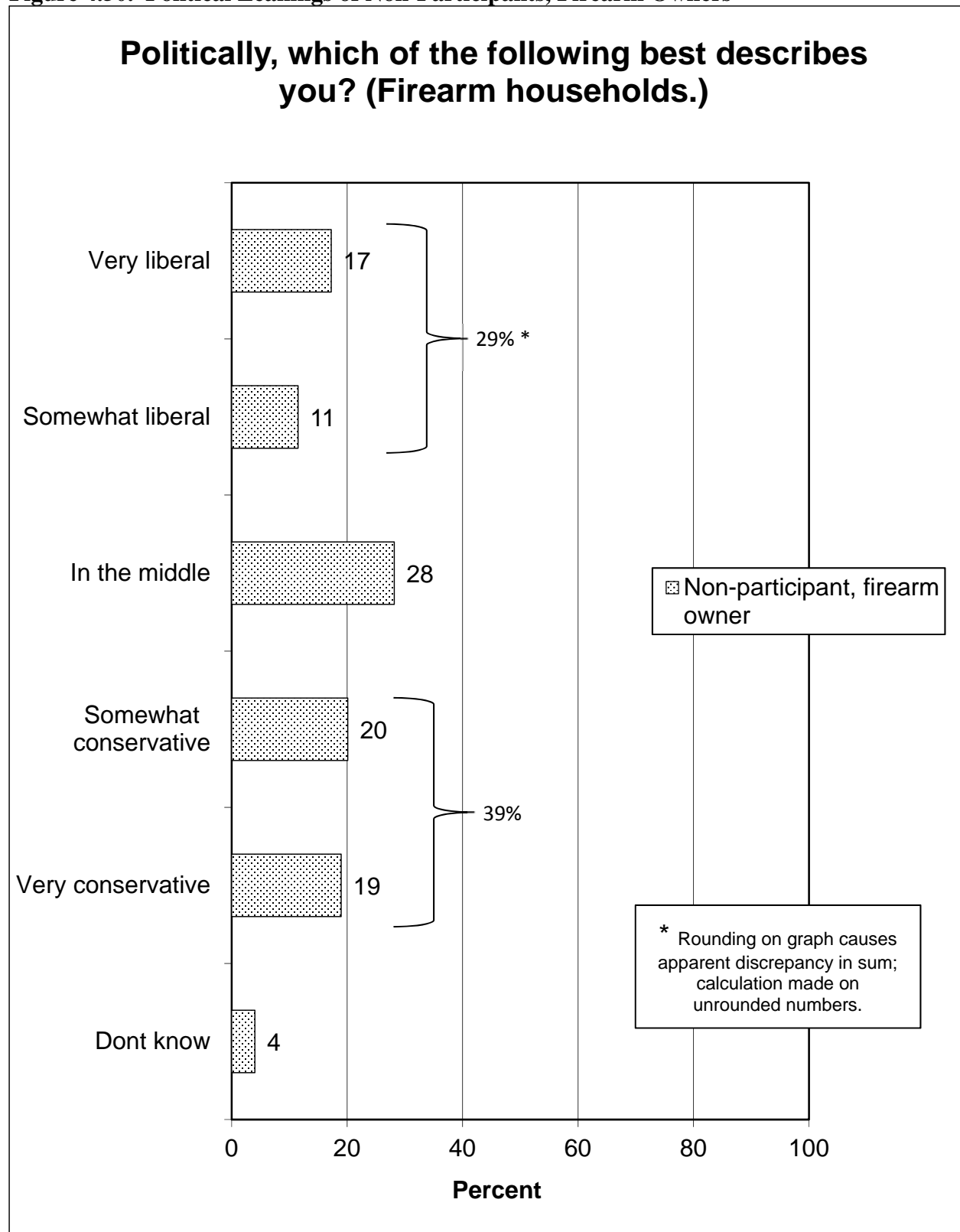
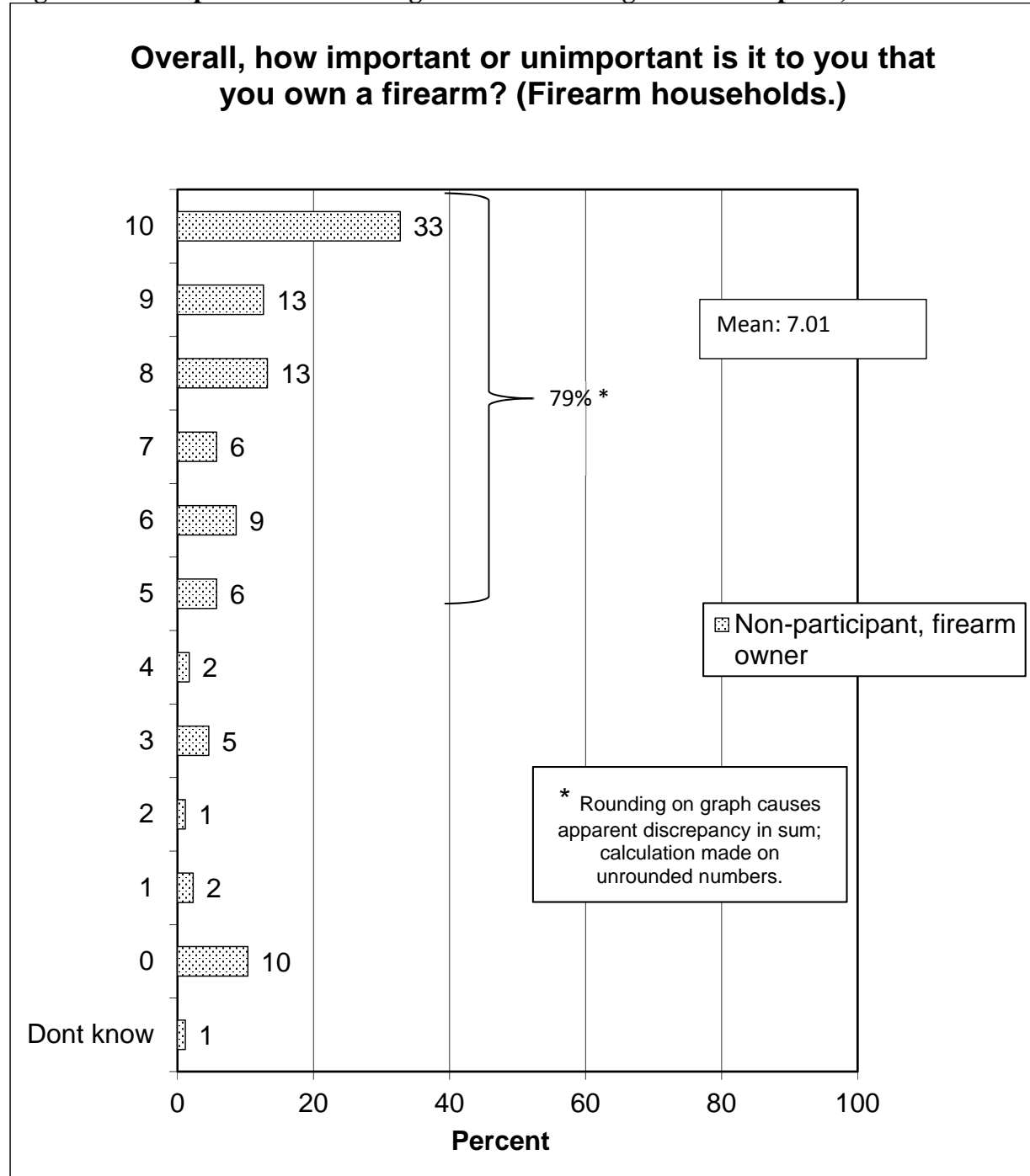
Figure 4.48. Residential Area in Which Non-Participants, Firearm Owners, Grew Up**Figure 4.49. Length of Time Owning a Firearm Among Non-Participants, Firearm Owners**

Figure 4.50. Political Leanings of Non-Participants, Firearm Owners

Motivations for Acquiring Firearms and How They Were Acquired (Non-Participants, Firearm Owners)

- Non-participants, although not having shot, still give relatively high ratings to the importance of owning a firearm.
 - Among this group, 33% rate the importance of owning a firearm at “10” (on a 0 to 10 scale); the vast majority (79%) give a rating of the midpoint or higher (Figure 4.51). The mean is 7.01.

Figure 4.51. Importance of Owning a Firearm Among Non-Participants, Firearm Owners



- **Handguns predominate as the types of firearms owned among firearm owners who are non-participants. Nearly two-thirds own a handgun.**
- The most common firearm owned, by far, is a modern handgun (63%) (Figure 4.52). Ownership of the other types is much lower: 26% own a modern shotgun, and only 24% own a modern rifle.
 - Among rifle owners, 39% have at least one AR-platform rifle (Figure 4.53).

Figure 4.52. Types of Firearms Owned Among Non-Participants, Firearm Owners

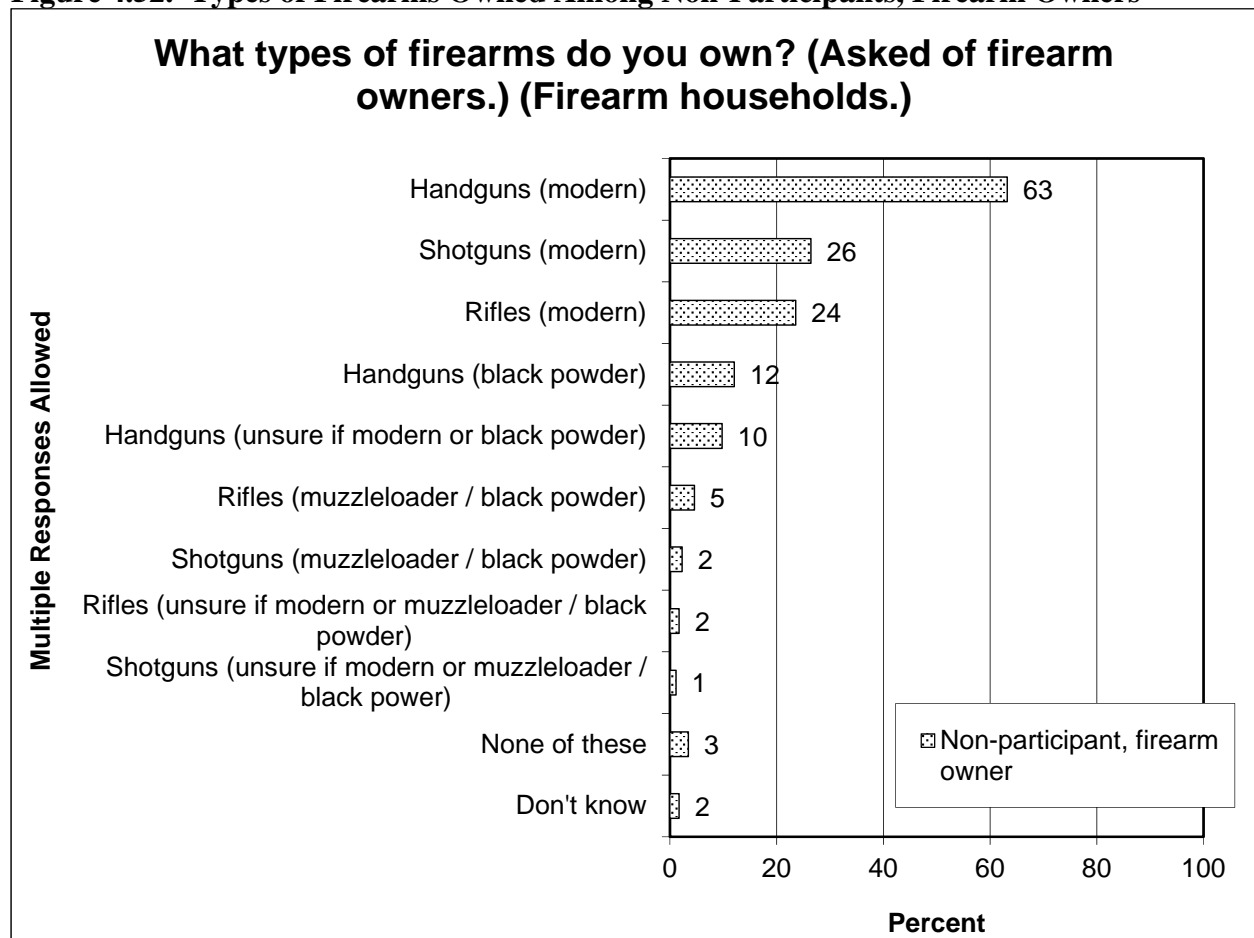
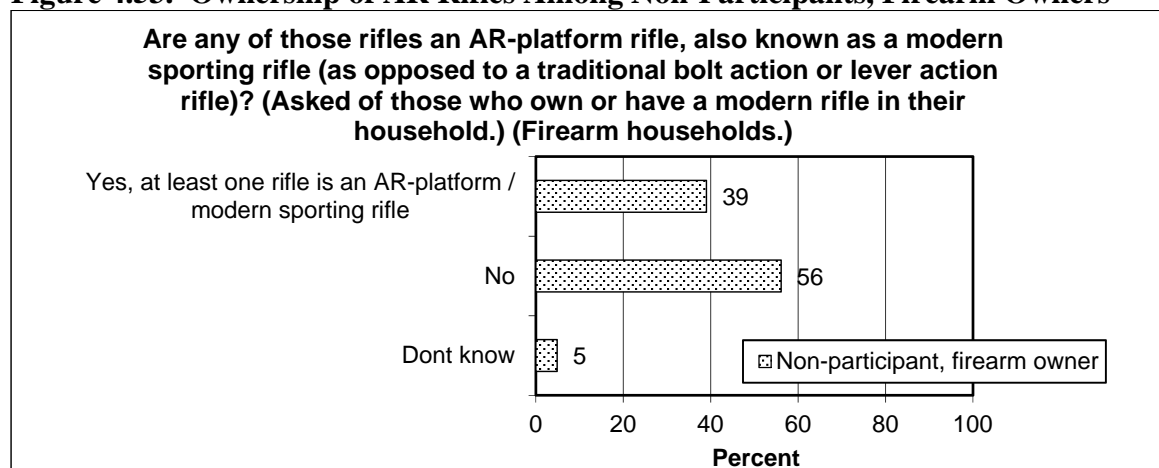


Figure 4.53. Ownership of AR Rifles Among Non-Participants, Firearm Owners



- **Only half of this group got any of their firearms by purchase; a third had been given firearms, and just under a third had inherited firearms.**
 - Half of non-participants who own a firearm had purchased at least one of their firearms (50%), while 33% had been given firearms, and 29% had inherited firearms (Figure 4.54). Further analysis found that 45% of this group had gotten all of their firearms either through gift or inheritance (i.e., did not purchase any).
 - Parents and spouses predominate as those who have given firearms: 56% indicated their fathers, 16% indicated their mothers, and 14% indicated their spouses—the top three on the list (Figure 4.55).

Figure 4.54. How Firearms Acquired Among Non-Participants, Firearm Owners

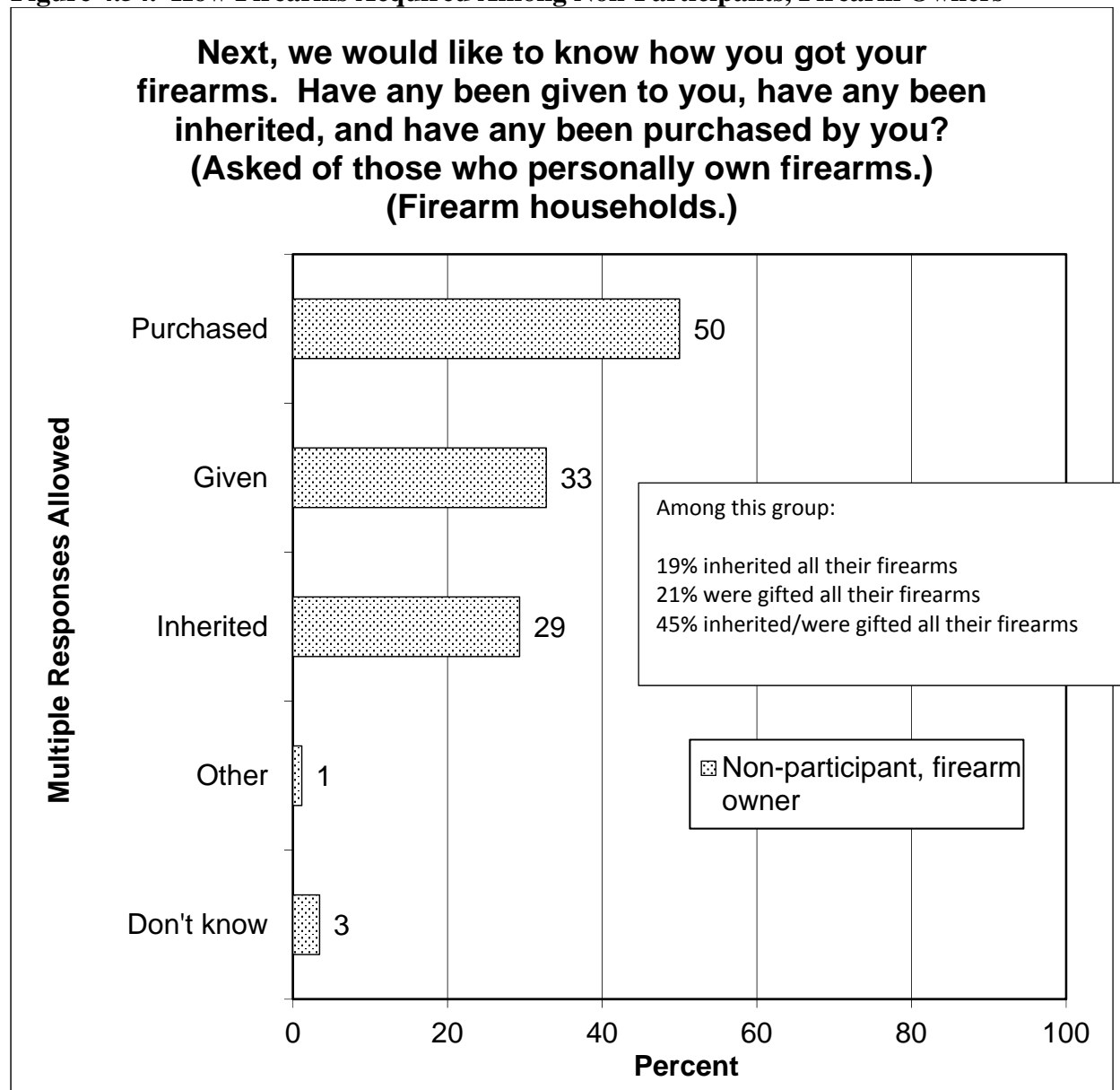
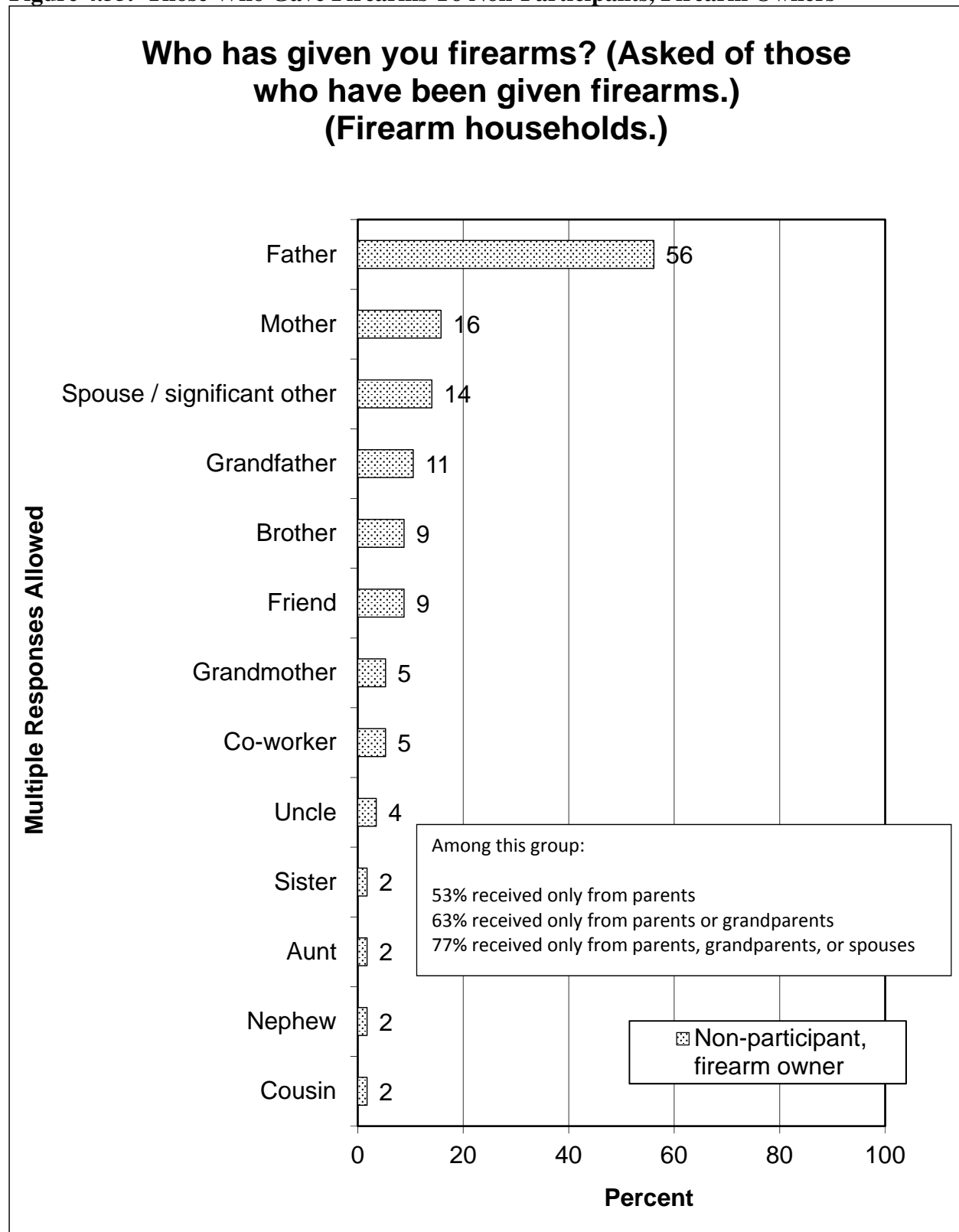


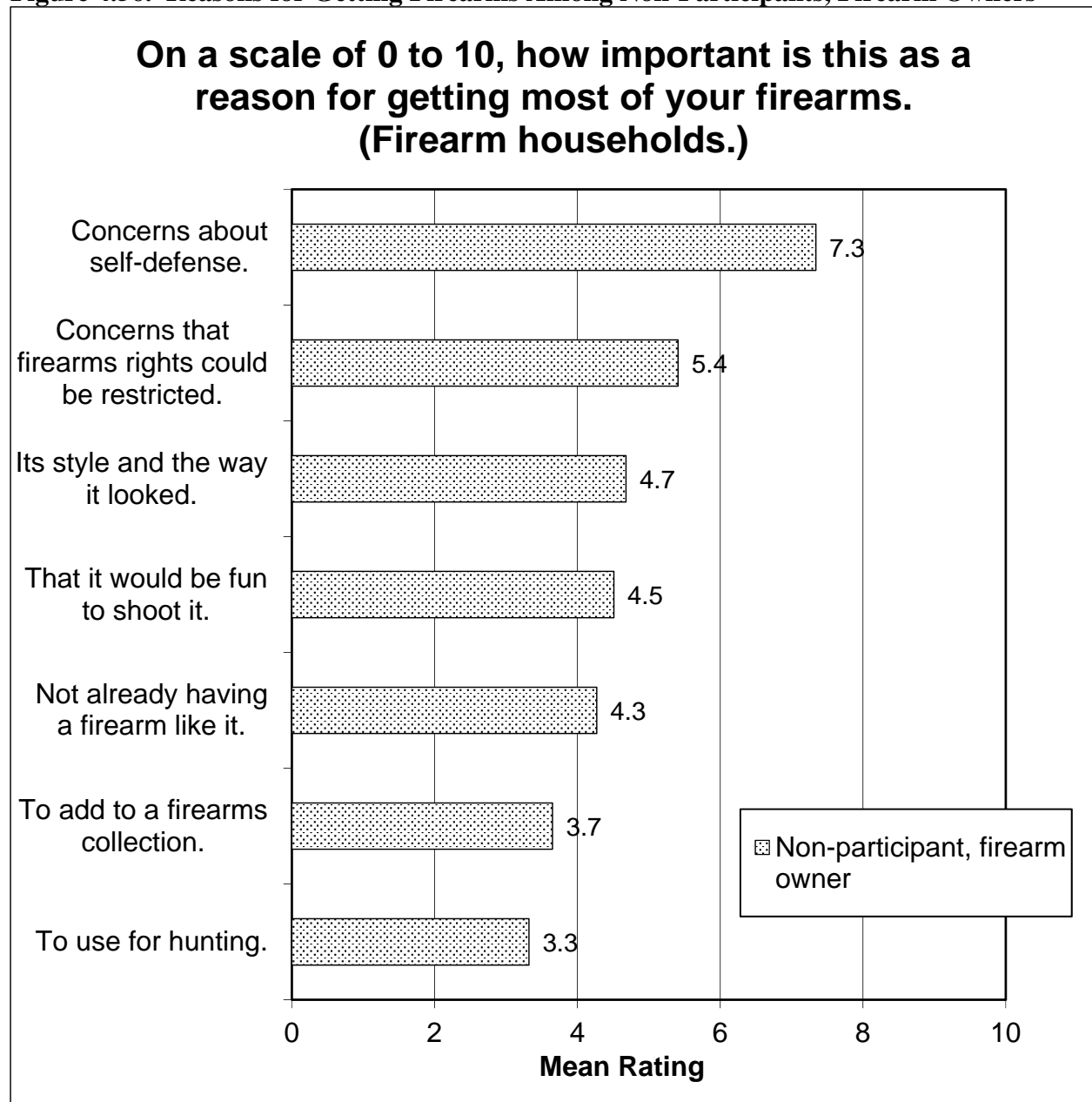
Figure 4.55. Those Who Gave Firearms To Non-Participants, Firearm Owners



A list of possible motivations for getting a firearm was presented in the survey of firearm households. The survey asked respondents to rate the importance of each motivation as a reason that they personally obtained most of their firearms. The question used a 0 to 10 scale, with 10 being the most important.

- **Self-defense and firearm rights are at the top as motivations for getting a firearm among these non-participants—the only reasons with a mean higher than the midpoint.**
- The mean rating of the importance of self-defense as a motive is at 7.3 (on a scale of 0 to 10, with 10 being the most important), and the mean for concerns about firearm rights is at 5.4 (Figure 4.56). At the bottom are for hunting and reasons related to collecting.

Figure 4.56. Reasons for Getting Firearms Among Non-Participants, Firearm Owners



Interest in Sport Shooting and Opinions on Strategies To Encourage Interest (Non-Participants, Firearm Owners)

- Among non-participants who are firearm owners, interest in going shooting is not robust.
 - About a quarter (24%) rate their interest as a “9” or “10”; fully half of this group give a rating of the midpoint or lower, including 14% rating their interest at “0” (Figure 4.57).
 - Target shooting is the top activity in which this group shows interest, with handgun target shooting at the top (53%), followed by target shooting with a rifle (27%) and target shooting with a shotgun (23%) (Figure 4.58).

Figure 4.57. Interest in Shooting Among Non-Participants, Firearm Owners

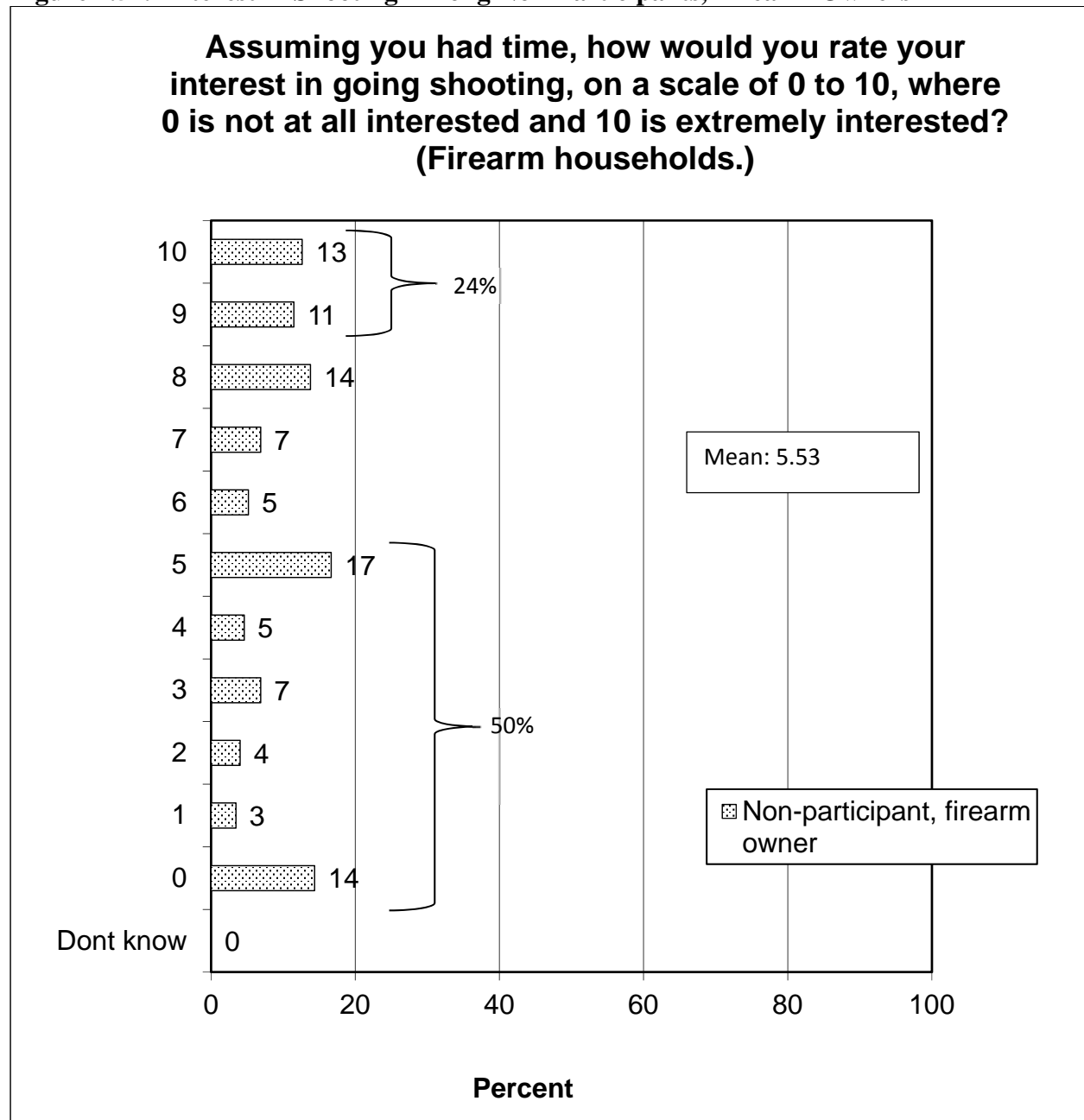
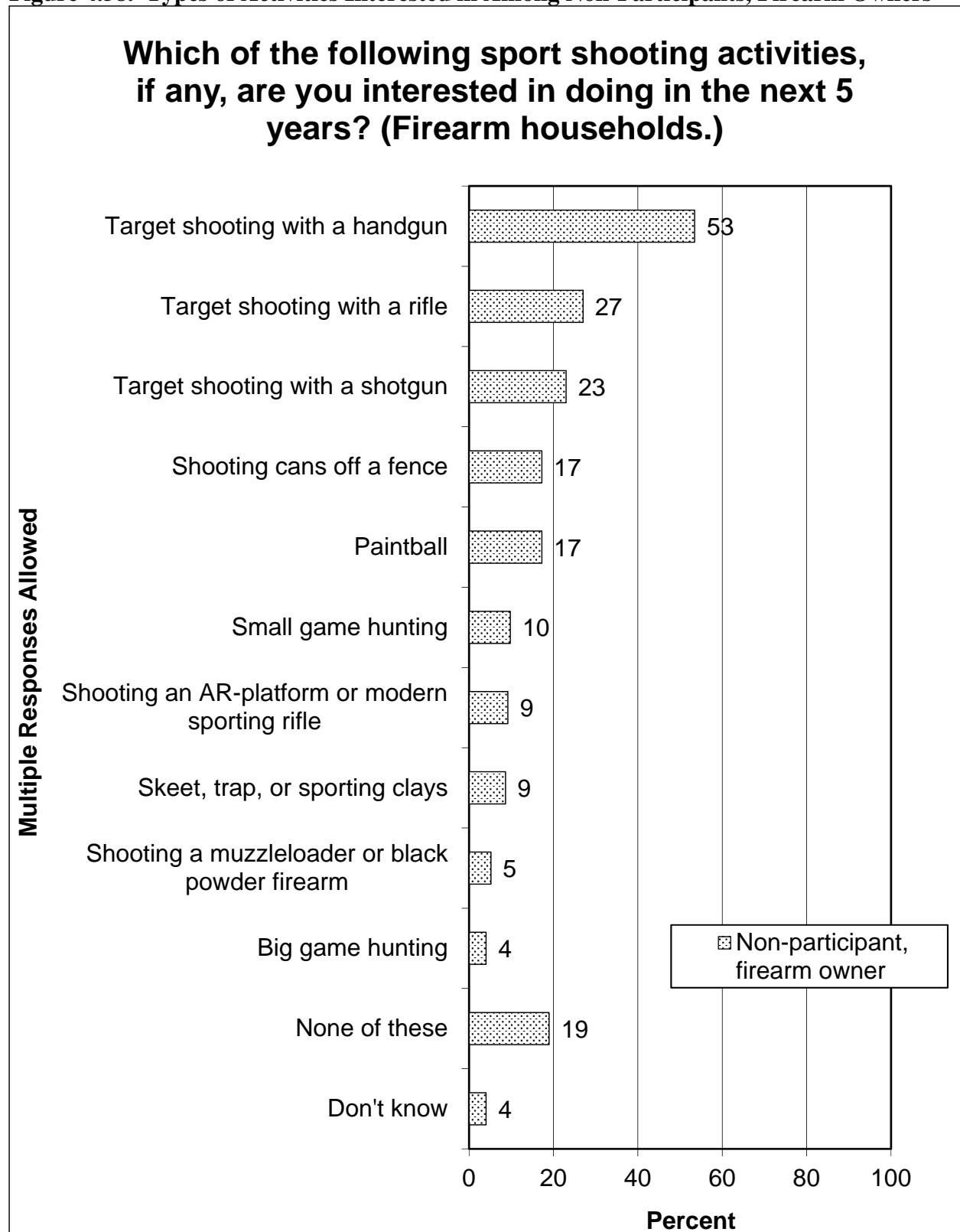
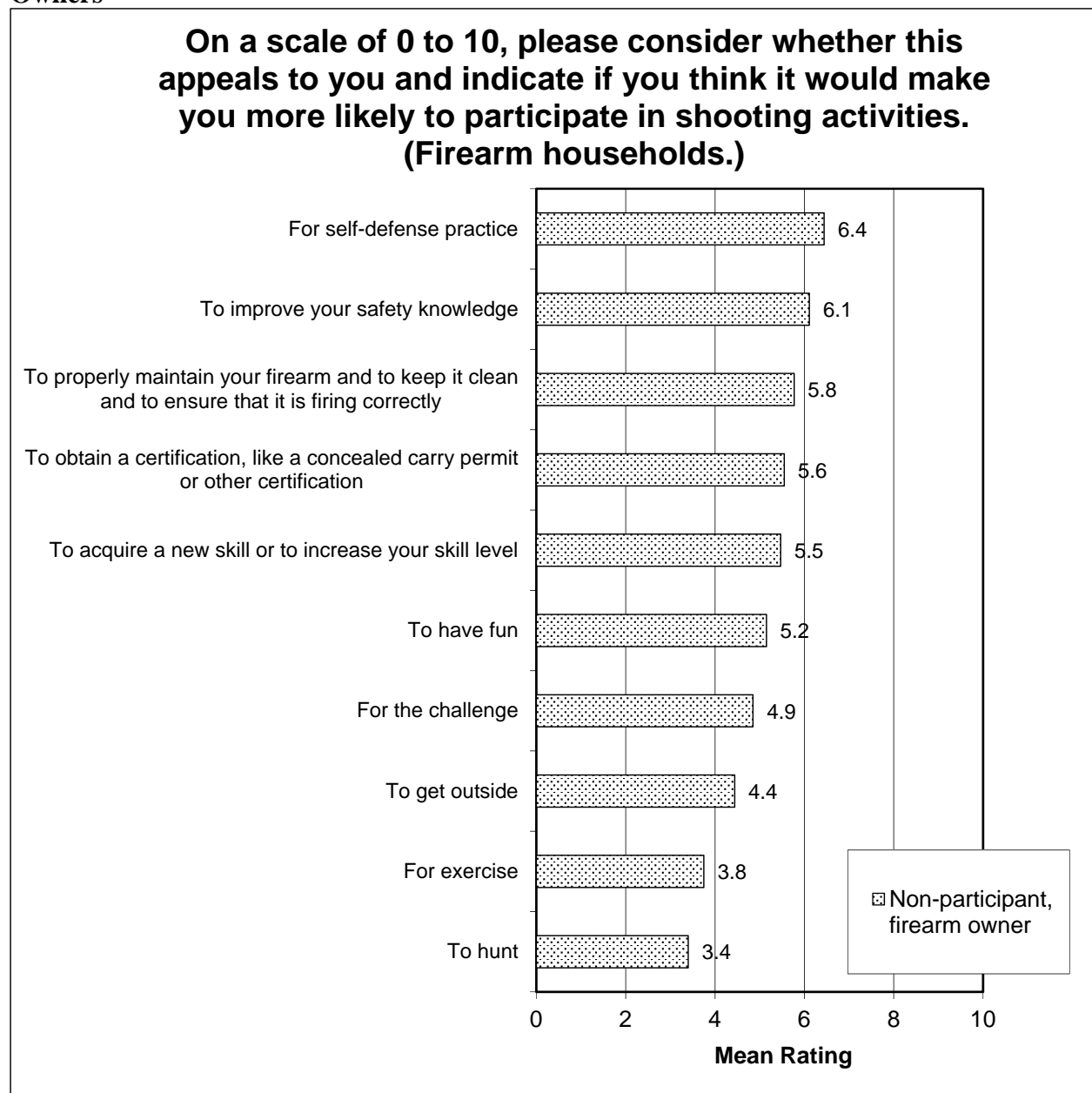


Figure 4.58. Types of Activities Interested in Among Non-Participants, Firearm Owners

The survey presented a list of reasons that might encourage sport shooting participation to those who had *not* gone sport shooting in the previous 5 years. For each reason, respondents gave a rating from 0 to 10, where 0 was that it would have no effect at all and 10 was that it would make the respondent much more likely to go sport shooting.

- **Self-defense practice or to improve safety knowledge are at the top of the list as motivations to encourage this group to go sport shooting.**
 - Self-defense practice was the reason at the top, with a mean rating of 6.4 (Figure 4.59). To improve safety knowledge was at 6.1. No other reason was higher than 6.0.

Figure 4.59. Motivations to Encourage Participation Among Non-Participants, Firearm Owners



The survey presented to respondents another list of incentives to encourage sport shooting participation. For each, respondents indicated whether it would make them much more interested, somewhat more interested, or a little more interested in going sport shooting, or whether it would not affect their interest level at all.

- **Free firearms training at a range, knowing that effective self-defense takes practice, and a class that offered detailed instruction on cleaning and maintenance are the three incentives at the top of the list for those firearm owners who are non-participants.**
 - Among this group, 42% said it would make them much more interested in shooting if there was a range that offered free firearms training, 33% said the same about knowing that effective self-defense requires regular practice, and 29% said much more interest would be generated for them if there was a range or class that instructed them on cleaning and maintaining their firearm (Figure 4.60).
 - At the bottom for this group is having a group or family discount at a range (22%).
 - Three graphs are shown: the percentage saying that the incentives would make them much more likely (Figure 4.60); the percentage saying that the incentives would make them much, somewhat, or a little more likely (Figure 4.61); and the percentage saying that the incentives would not affect their interest at all (Figure 4.62).

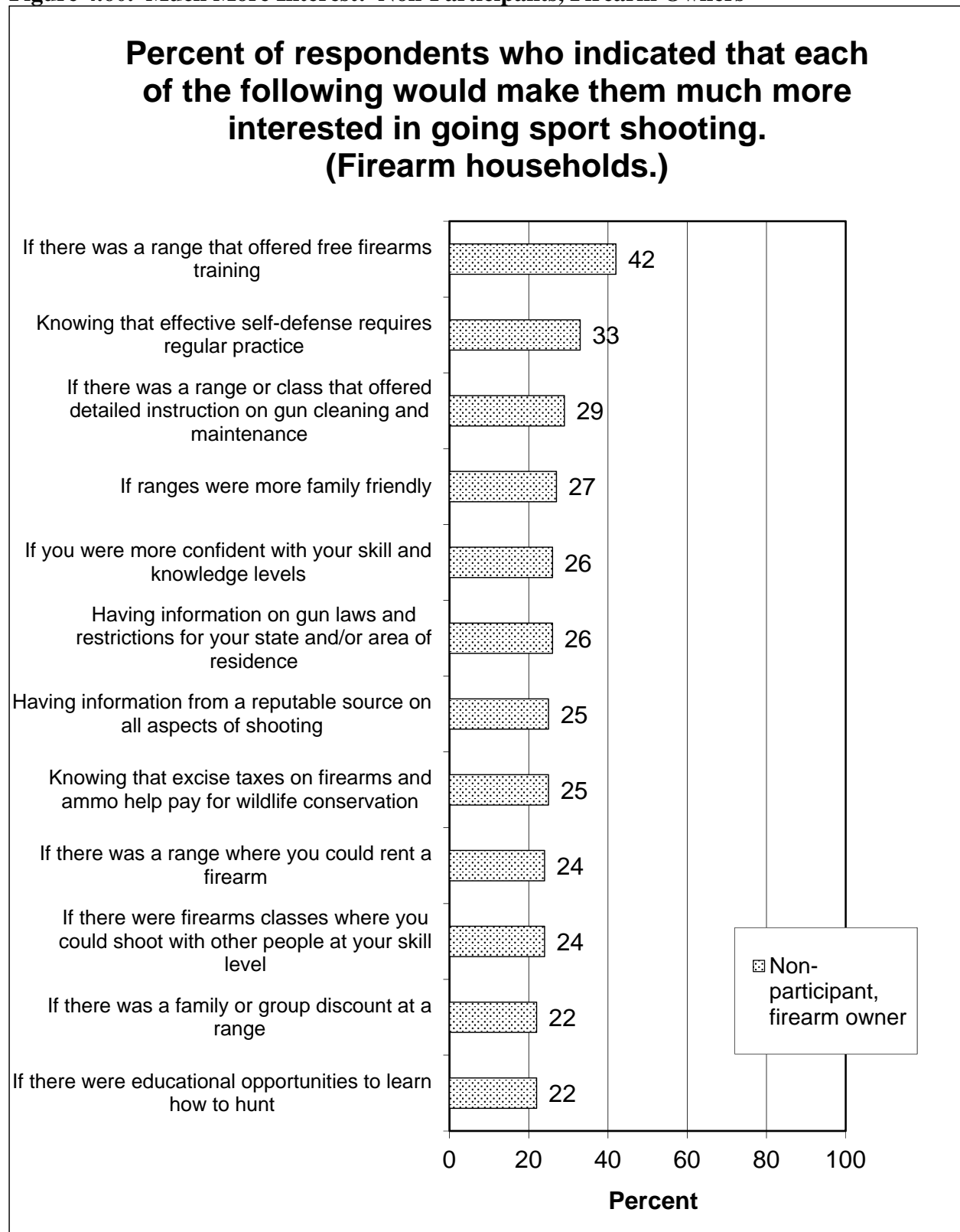
Figure 4.60. Much More Interest: Non-Participants, Firearm Owners

Figure 4.61. Much More, Somewhat More, or a Little More Interest: Non-Participants, Firearm Owners

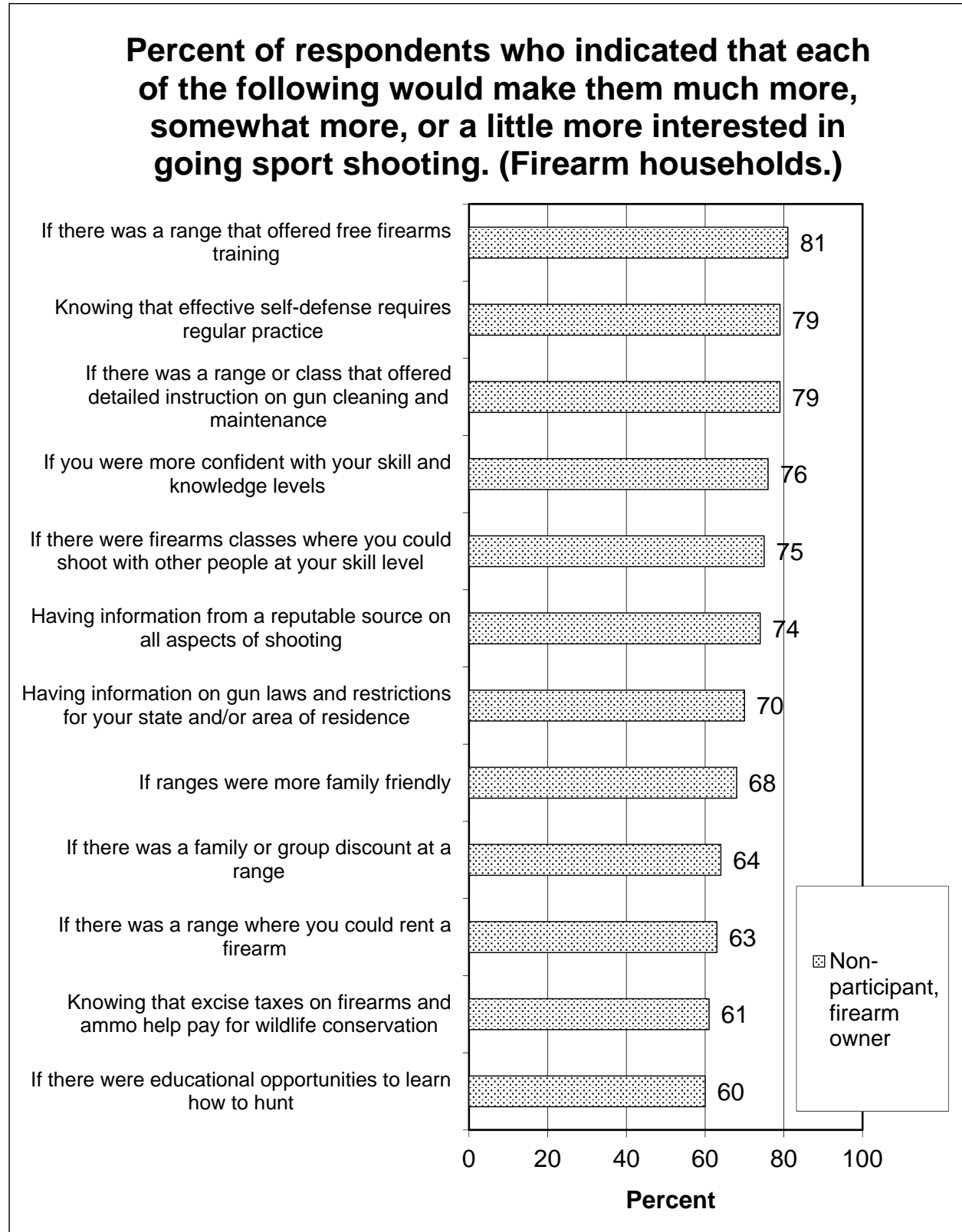
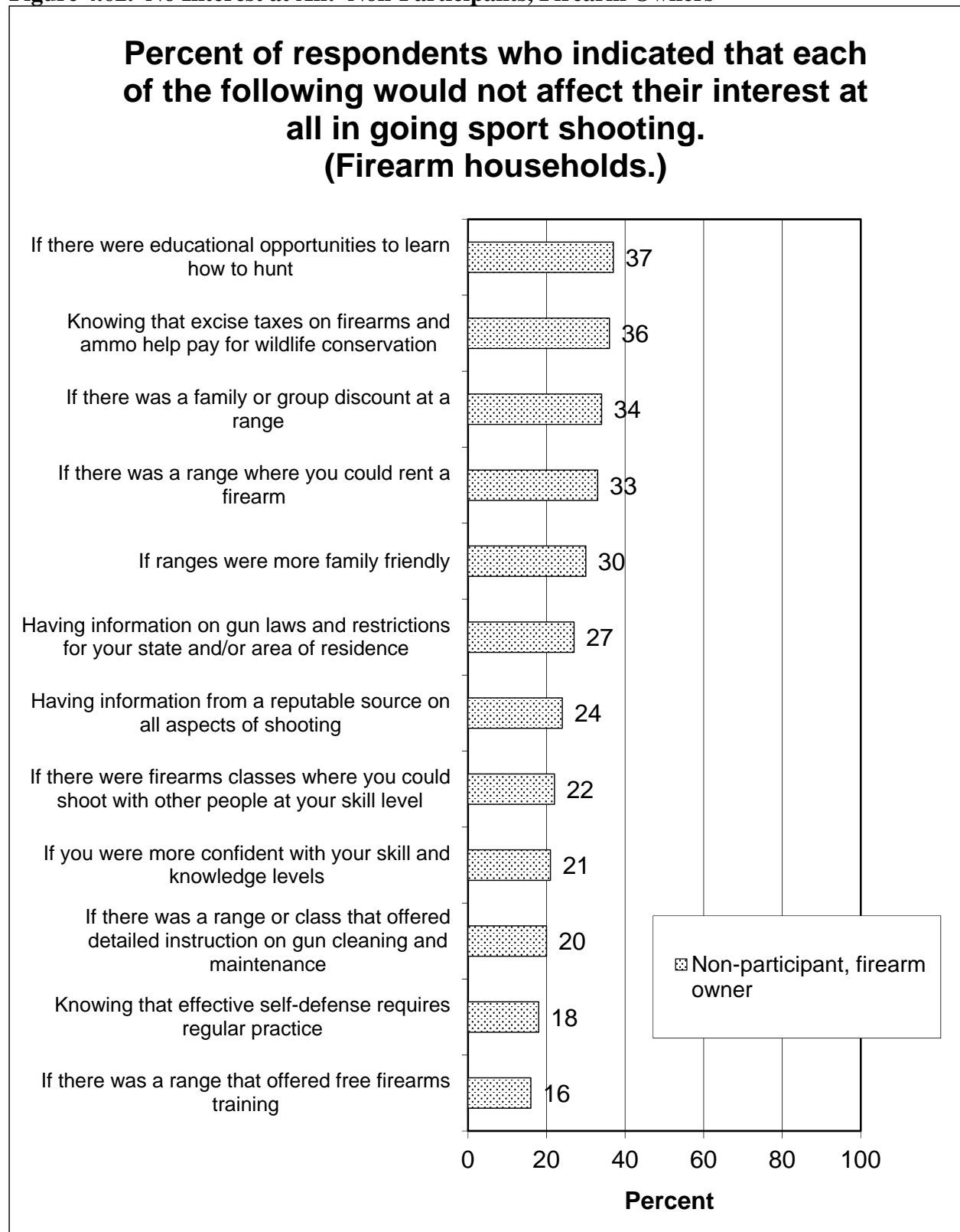


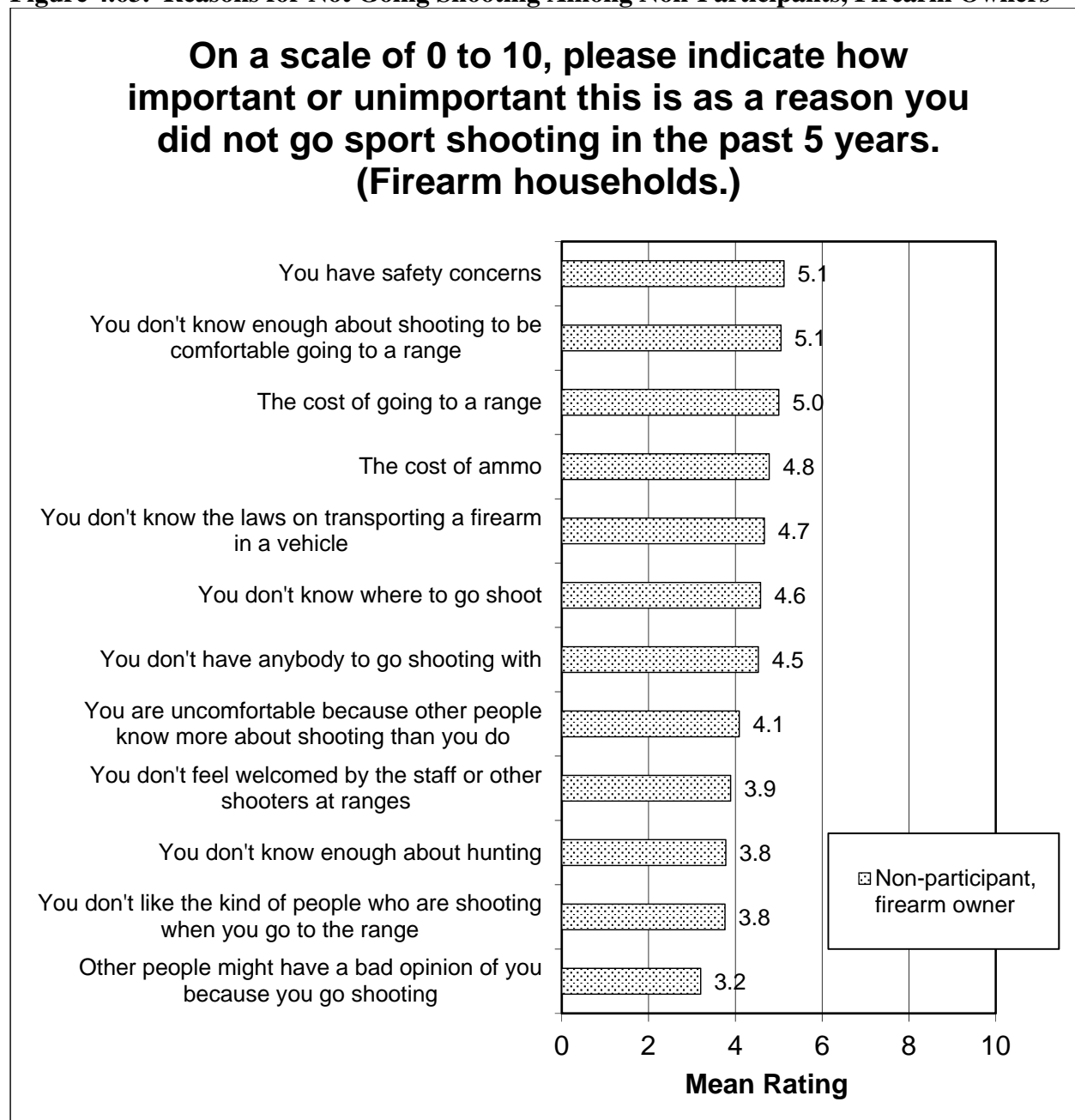
Figure 4.62. No Interest at All: Non-Participants, Firearm Owners

Constraints To Sport Shooting Participation (Non-Participants, Firearm Owners)

The survey asked another series of questions (using a scale of 0 to 10) where respondents rated the importance of various potential reasons for *not* going sport shooting in the past 5 years.

- **Safety concerns and not knowing enough to be comfortable at a range are the biggest constraints. Costs are next on the list.**
 - Safety concerns (mean rating of 5.1) and not knowing enough to be comfortable at a range (also 5.1) are at the top, closely followed by the cost of going to a range (5.0) and the cost of ammo (4.8) (Figure 4.63).

Figure 4.63. Reasons for Not Going Shooting Among Non-Participants, Firearm Owners



INFREQUENT ACTIVE SHOOTERS

This section focuses on inactive shooters, both firearm owners and non-owners. This section looks at demographic characteristics, motivations, likely interest in shooting, constraints to shooting, and participation in shooting among this group.

Demographic Characteristics and Data About *Infrequent Active Shooters*

- **On some characteristics, it is difficult to say what is typical. For instance, this group is about equally divided between males and females, their ages are also fairly evenly distributed, and having children in the household is just under half. In two ways, they can be characterized: they are mostly white and they are mostly suburban or urban.**
 - Infrequent active shooters are evenly split between males (50%) and females (50%) (Figure 4.64). (This is compared to the proportion of sport shooters who are female, as follows. In a study of 2016 shooters, 31% of these sport shooters were female. See *Sport Shooting Participation in the United States in 2016*, a study conducted for the NSSF by Responsive Management in 2017.)
 - This group is roughly divided into thirds: 35% are younger than 35 years, 36% are 35 to 54 years old, and 29% are 55 years old or older (Figure 4.65). (Rounding on the graph causes the apparent discrepancy in those reported to be younger than 35 years.) Their mean age is 43.32 years.
 - Although mostly white (77%), they also have 10% who identify as Latino, 7% who identify as African-American, and 7% who are East Asian (Figure 4.66).
 - Most commonly, this group is suburban (40%), and the large majority are on the urban/suburban side (61%) (Figure 4.67). Meanwhile, 18% are rural.
 - A little under half (46%) have a bachelor's degree (with or without a higher degree) (Figure 4.68).
 - About a fifth are retired (21%) (Figure 4.69). The most common field of occupation is computer, electronics, technical (11% of those not retired) and education (8%) (Figure 4.70).
 - Just over a third of this group (36%) have minor children living at home (Figure 4.71). When including adult children too, 46% have any children living at home (Figure 4.72).
- **Most commonly this group grew up in the suburbs, and a large majority of this group grew up in the urban/suburban end of the continuum.**
 - The survey asked about the residential area in which the respondent grew up (Figure 4.73). The results match current living areas, with the majority being on the urban/suburban side of the continuum.
- **For the most part, these people have owned a firearm or had one in their household for 5 years or less.**
 - Among firearm owners who are infrequent active shooters, 42% have owned a firearm for 5 years or less (48%) (Figure 4.74); among non-owners in a firearm household who are infrequent active shooters, 44% have had a firearm in the household for 5 years or less (Figure 4.75).
- **Most commonly, this group is in the middle or conservative; only about a fifth are liberal.**
 - The most common political leaning is in the middle (38%), very closely followed by conservative (37%); meanwhile, 20% are liberal (Figure 4.76).

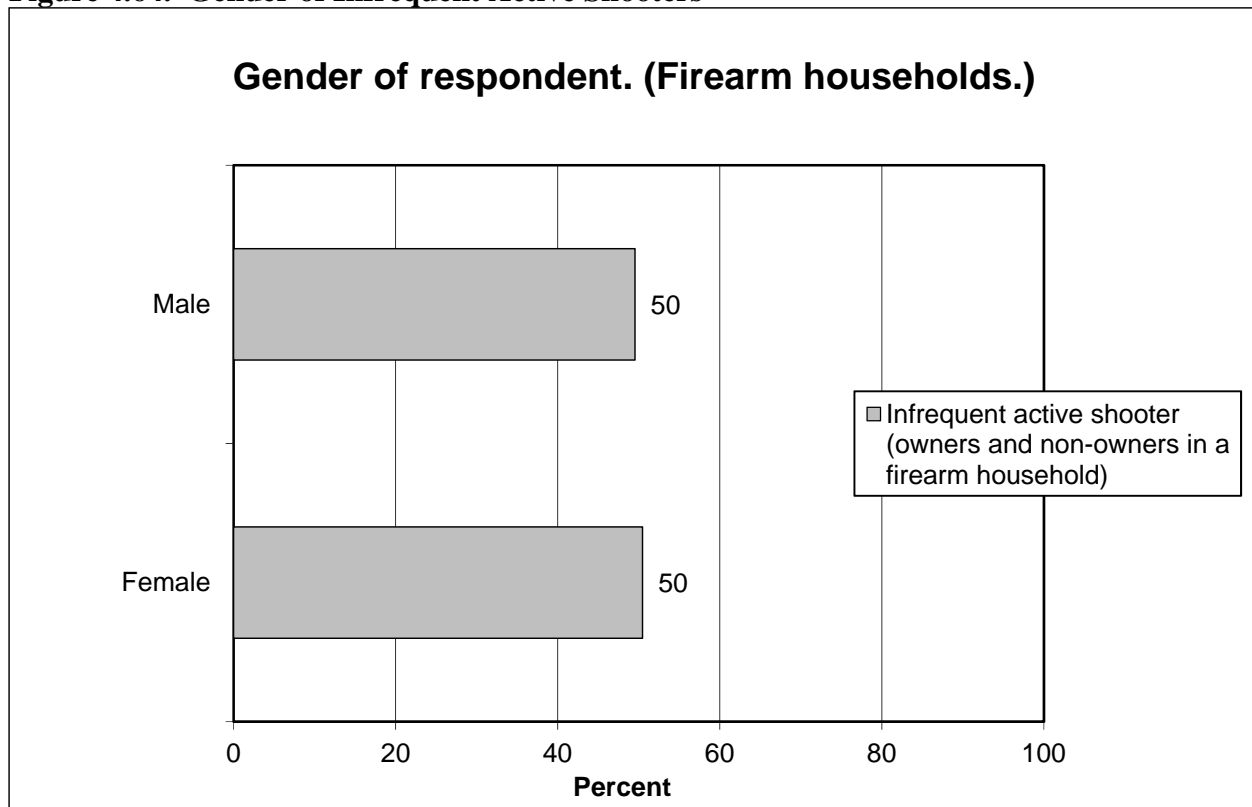
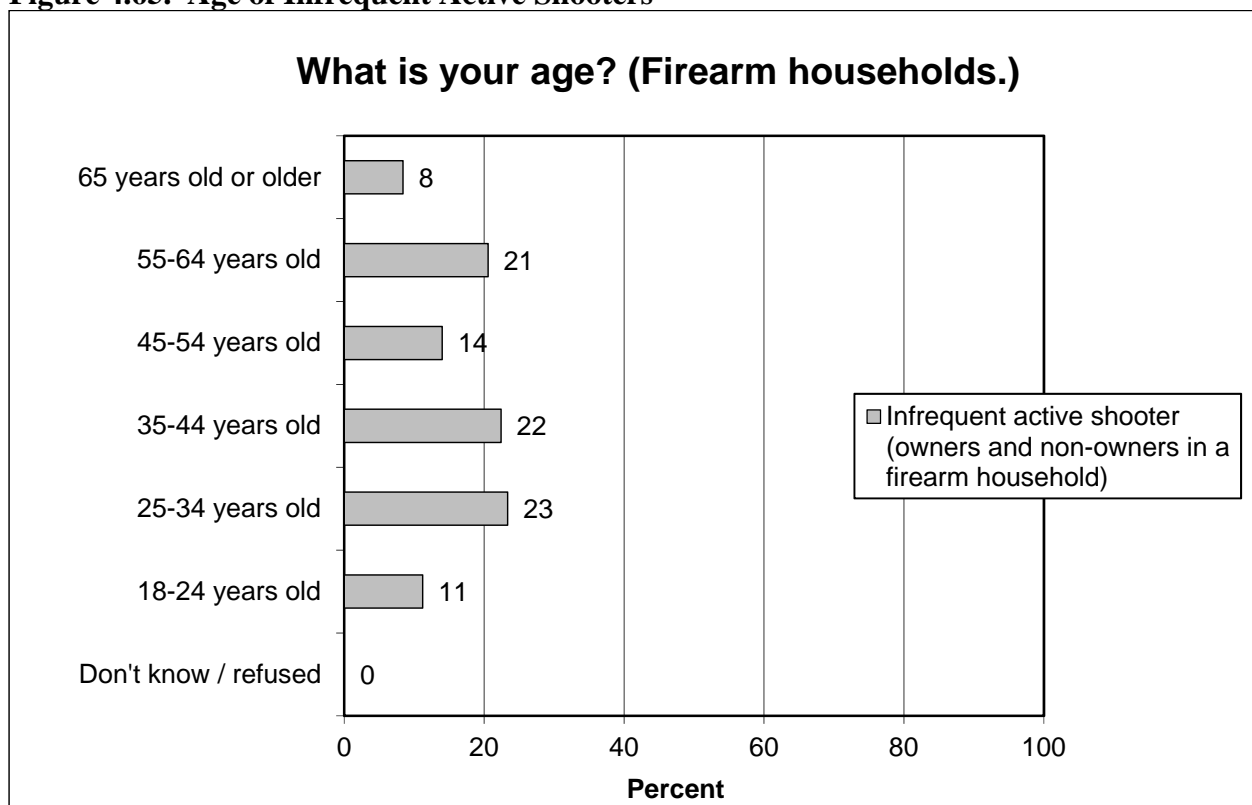
Figure 4.64. Gender of Infrequent Active Shooters**Figure 4.65. Age of Infrequent Active Shooters**

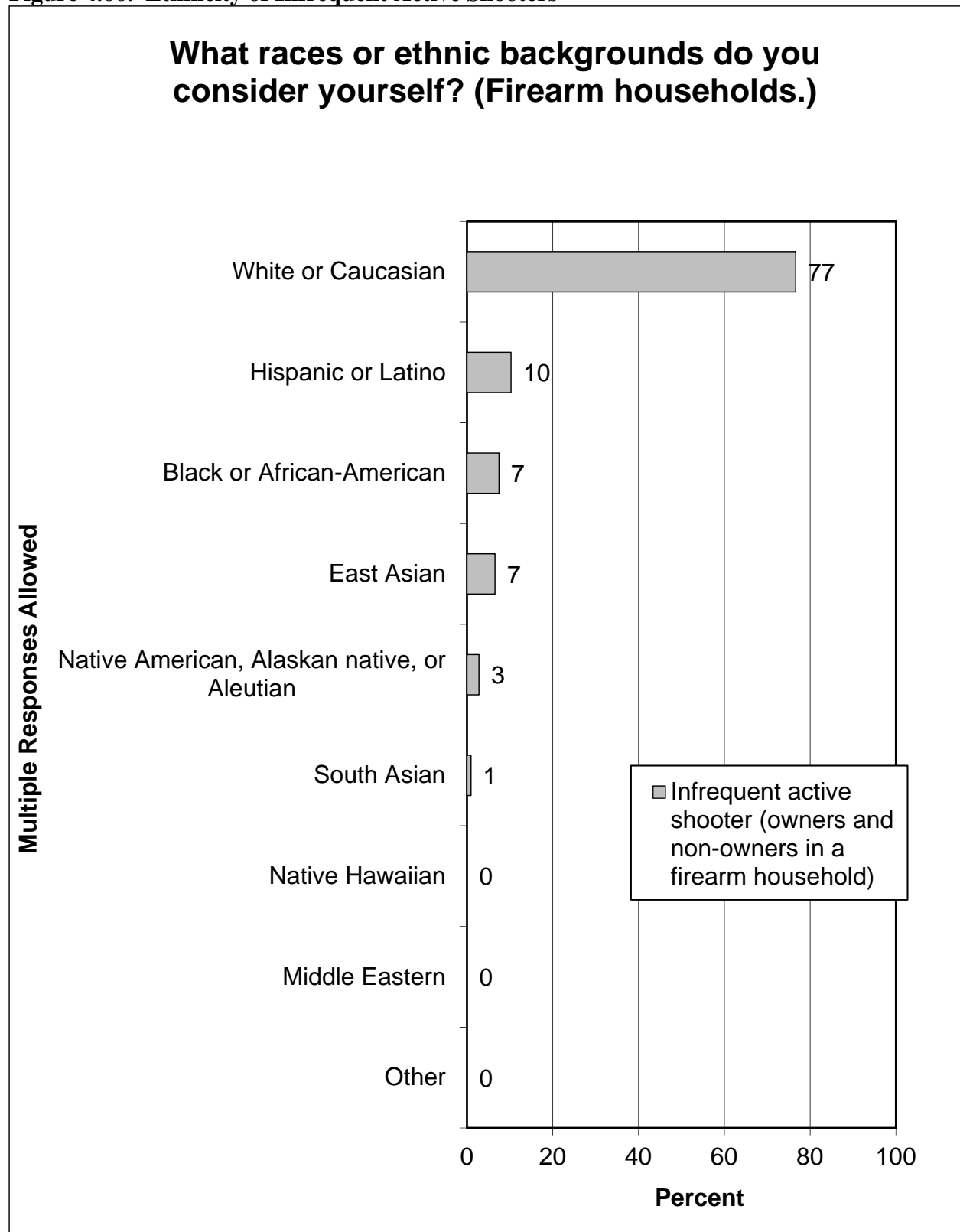
Figure 4.66. Ethnicity of Infrequent Active Shooters

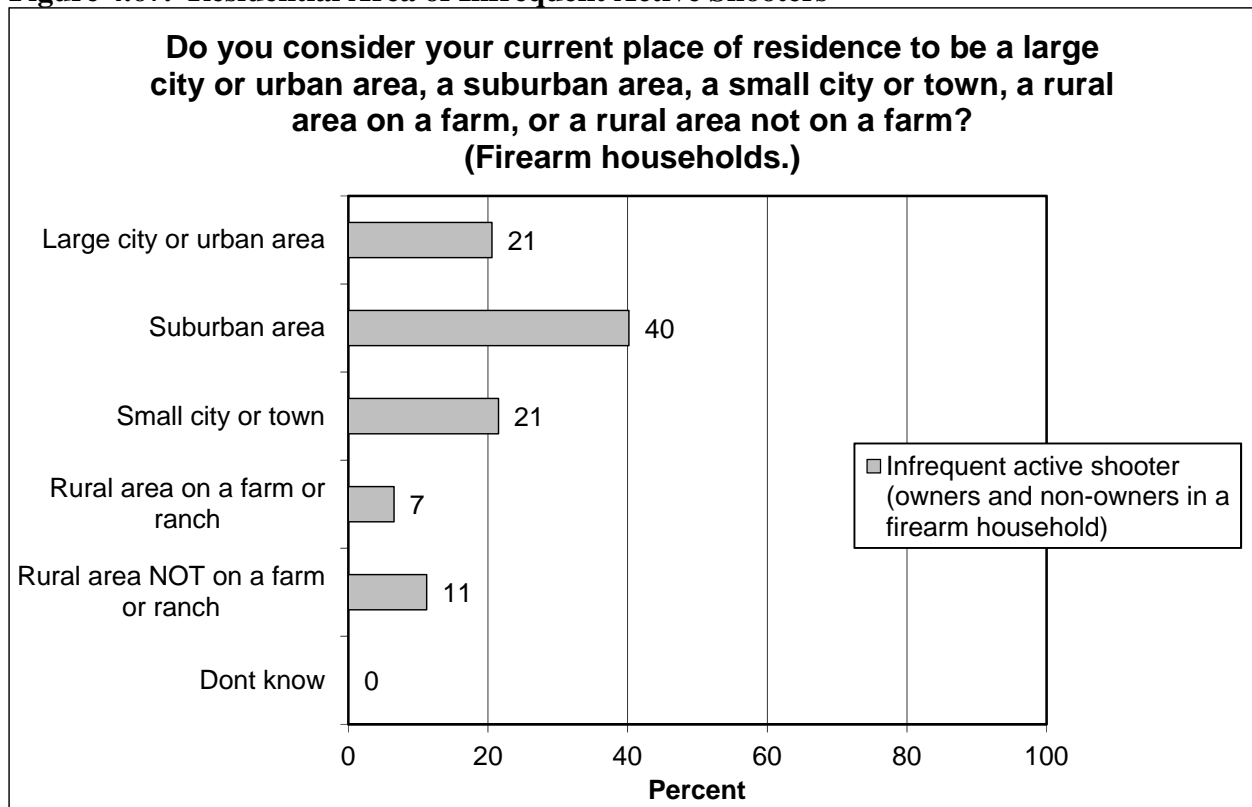
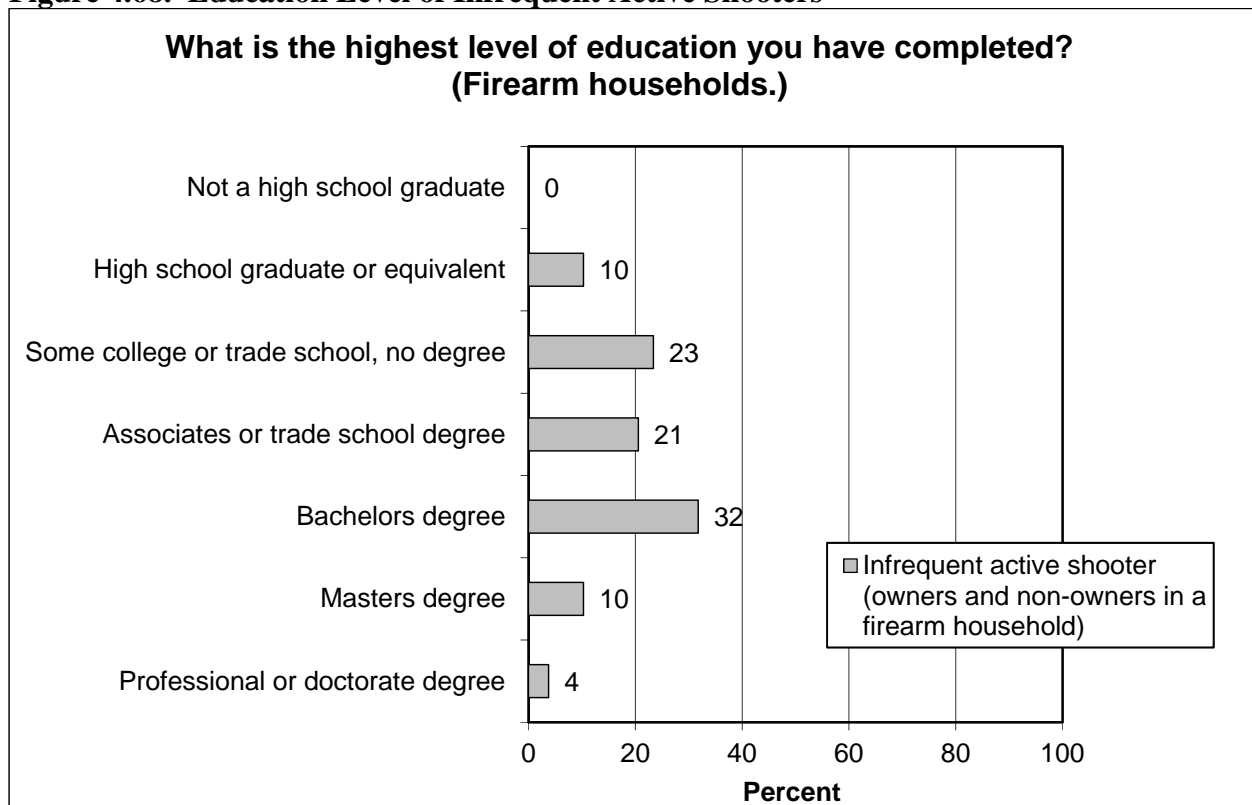
Figure 4.67. Residential Area of Infrequent Active Shooters**Figure 4.68. Education Level of Infrequent Active Shooters**

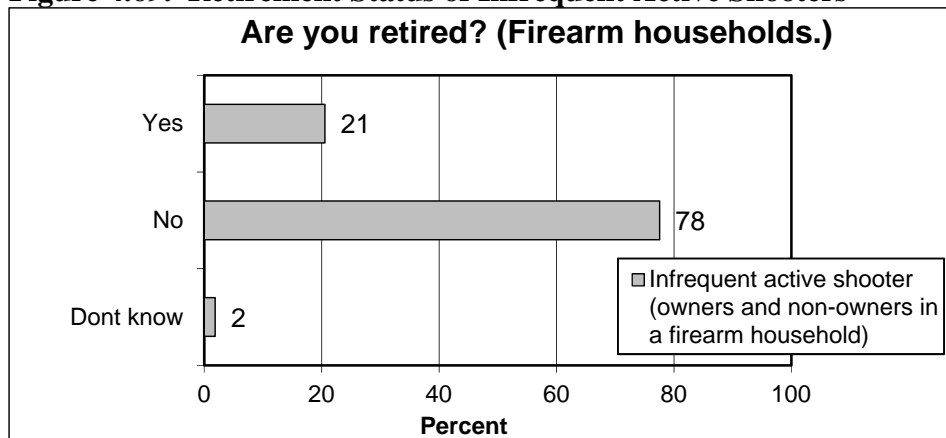
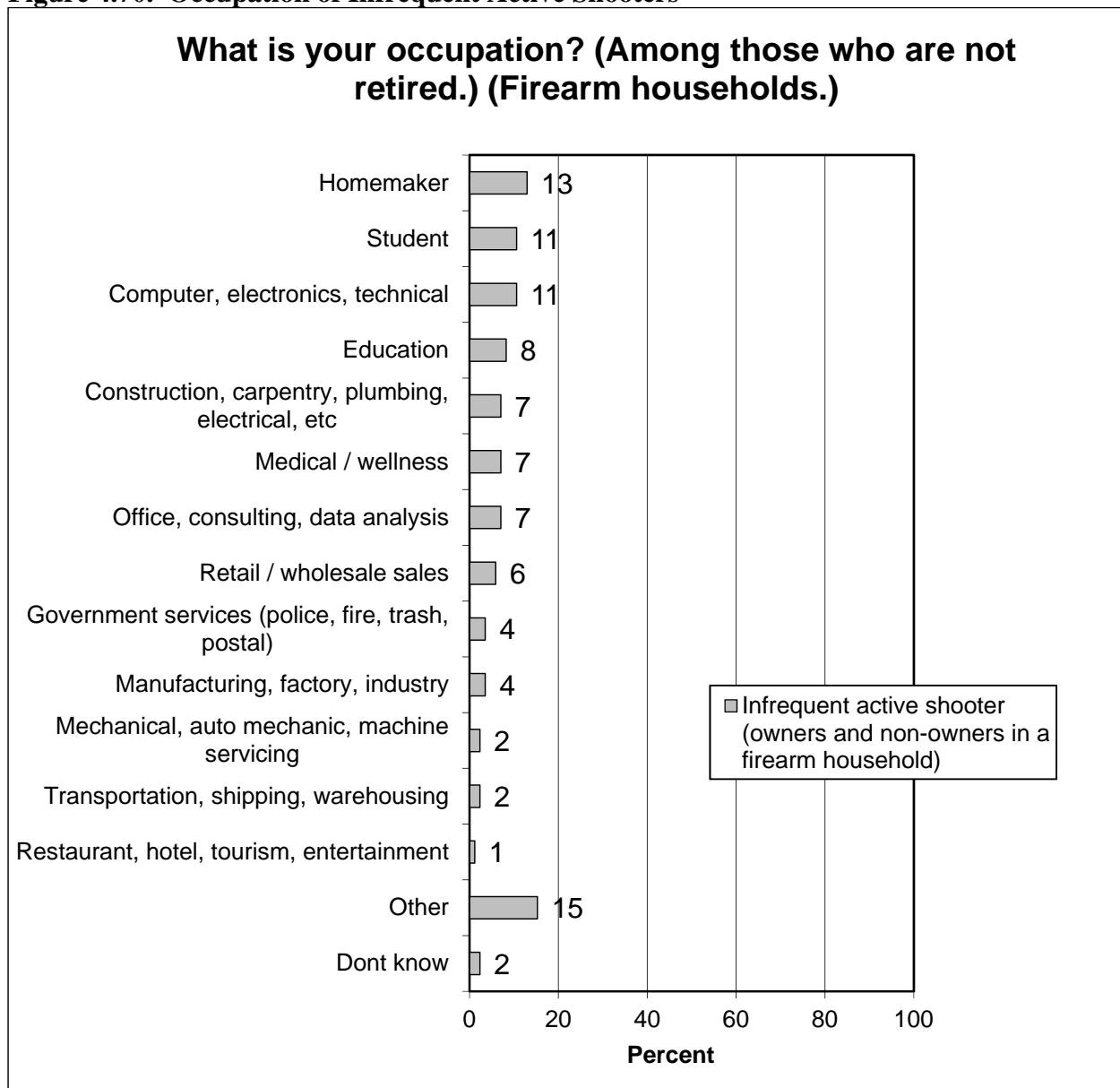
Figure 4.69. Retirement Status of Infrequent Active Shooters**Figure 4.70. Occupation of Infrequent Active Shooters**

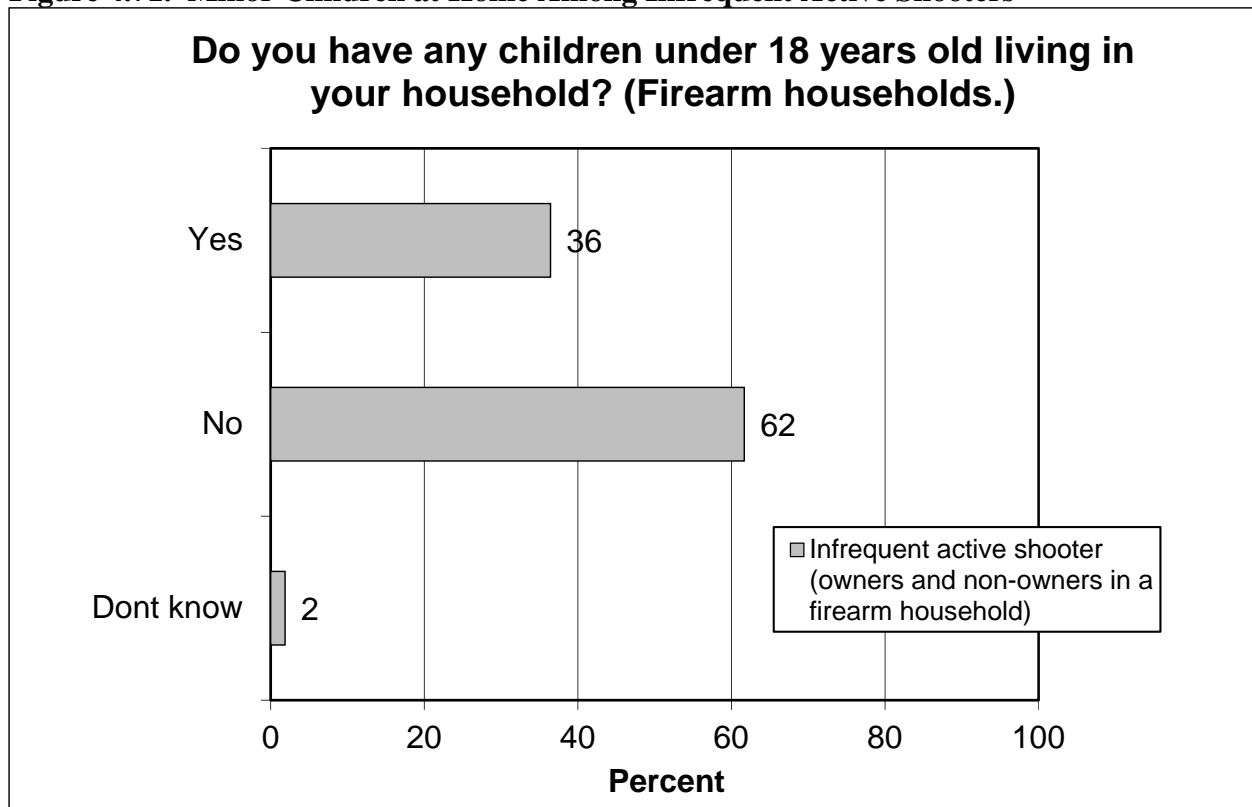
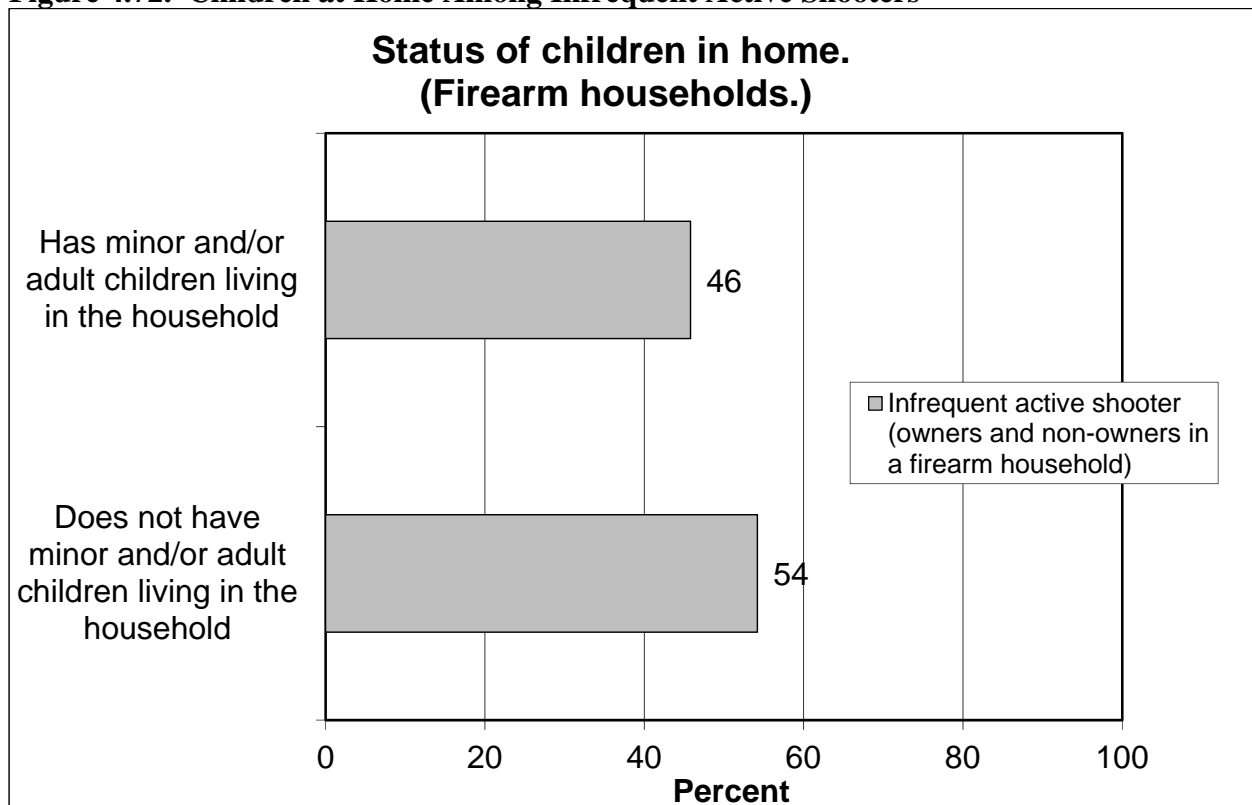
Figure 4.71. Minor Children at Home Among Infrequent Active Shooters**Figure 4.72. Children at Home Among Infrequent Active Shooters**

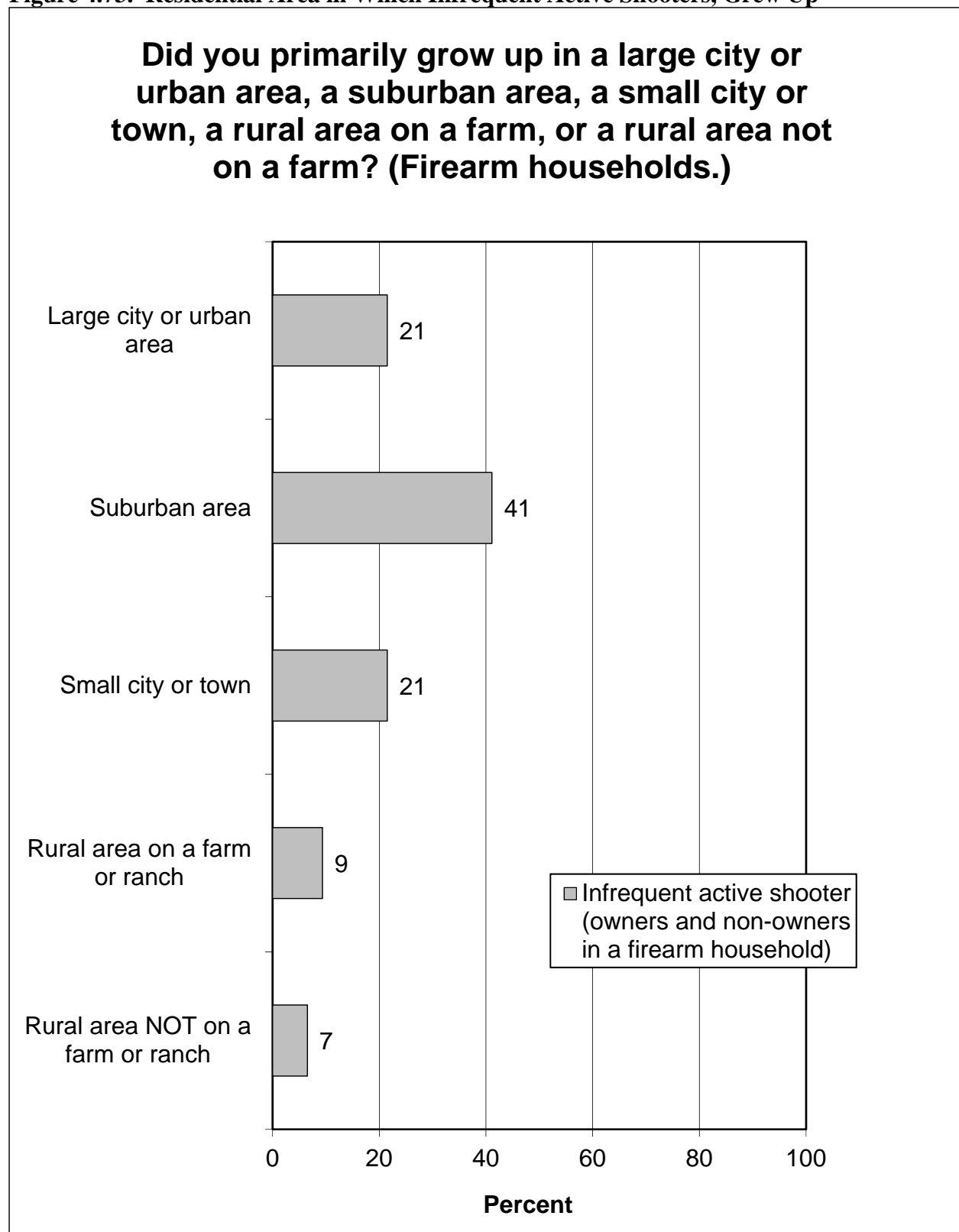
Figure 4.73. Residential Area in Which Infrequent Active Shooters, Grew Up

Figure 4.74. Length of Time Owning a Firearm Among Infrequent Active Shooters Who Are Firearm Owners

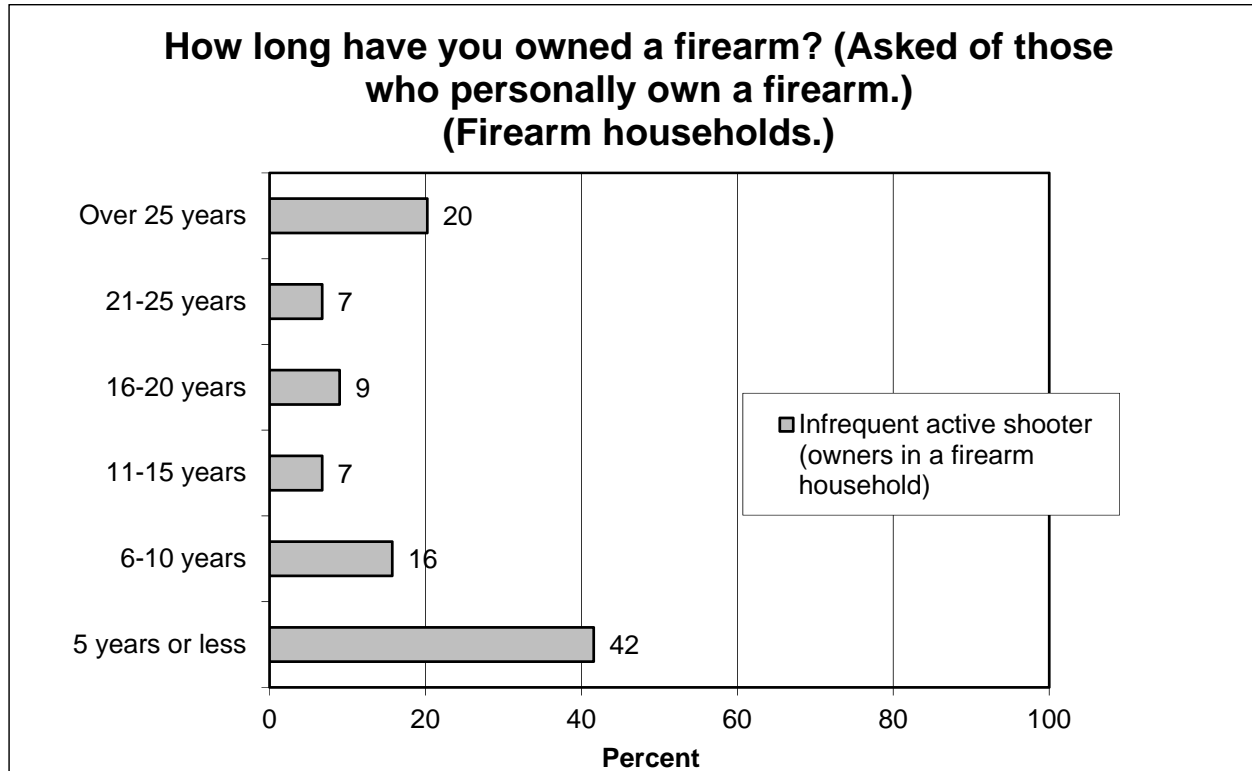


Figure 4.75. Length of Time Household Has Had a Firearm Among Infrequent Active Shooters Who Are Non-Owners

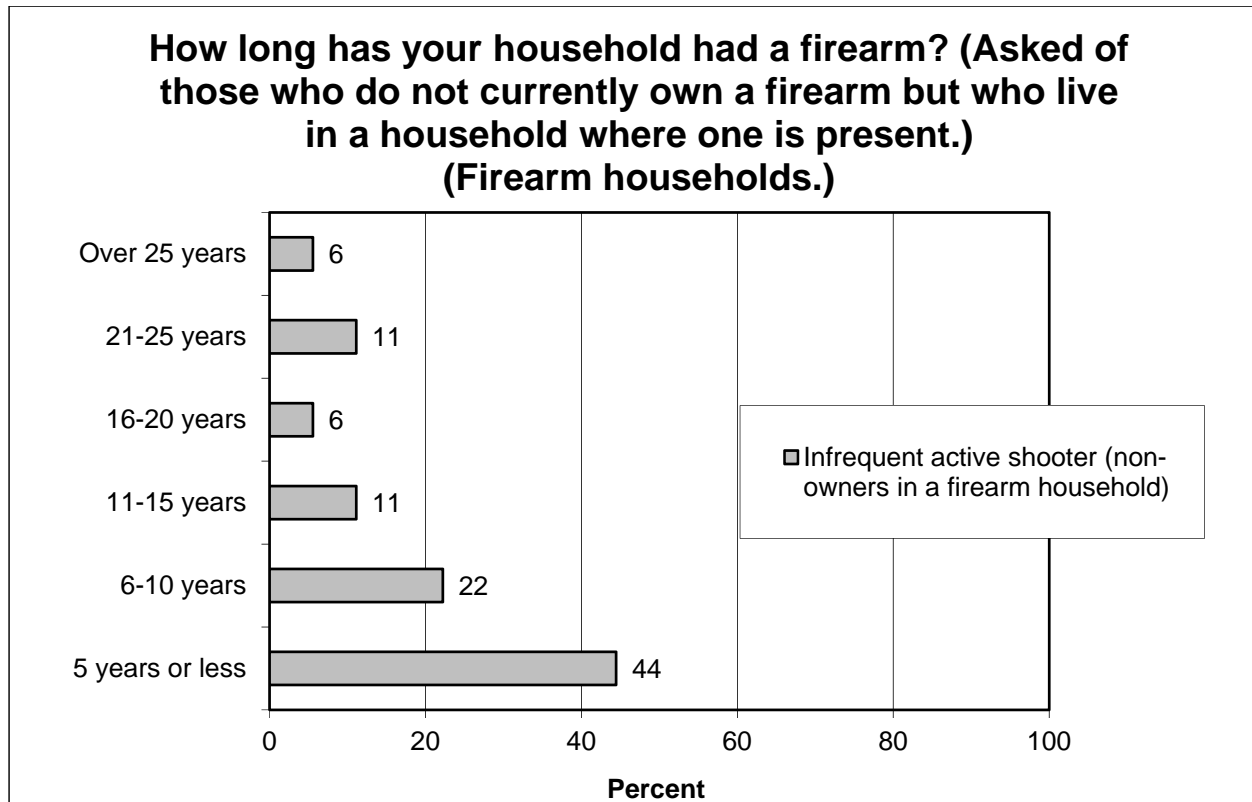
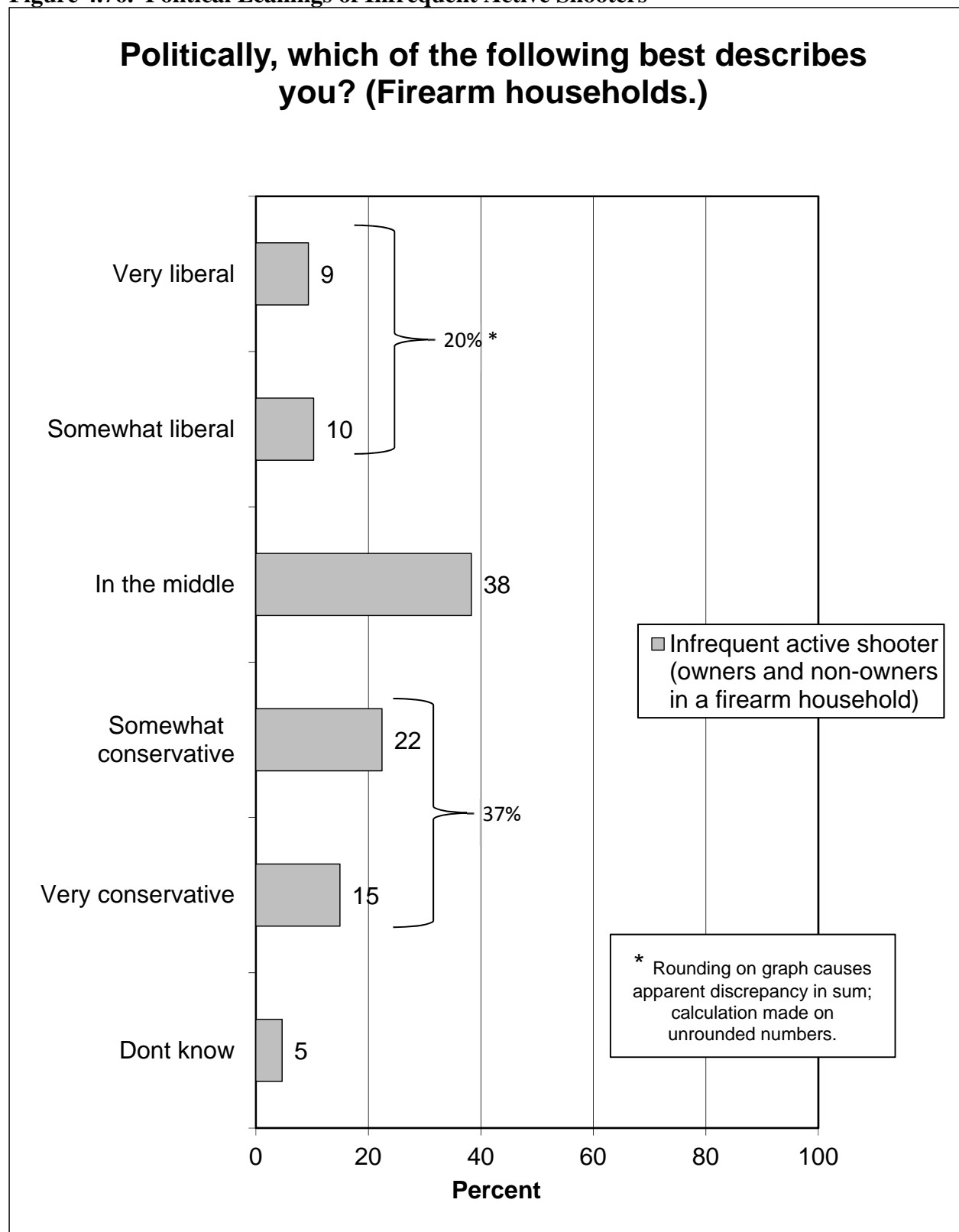
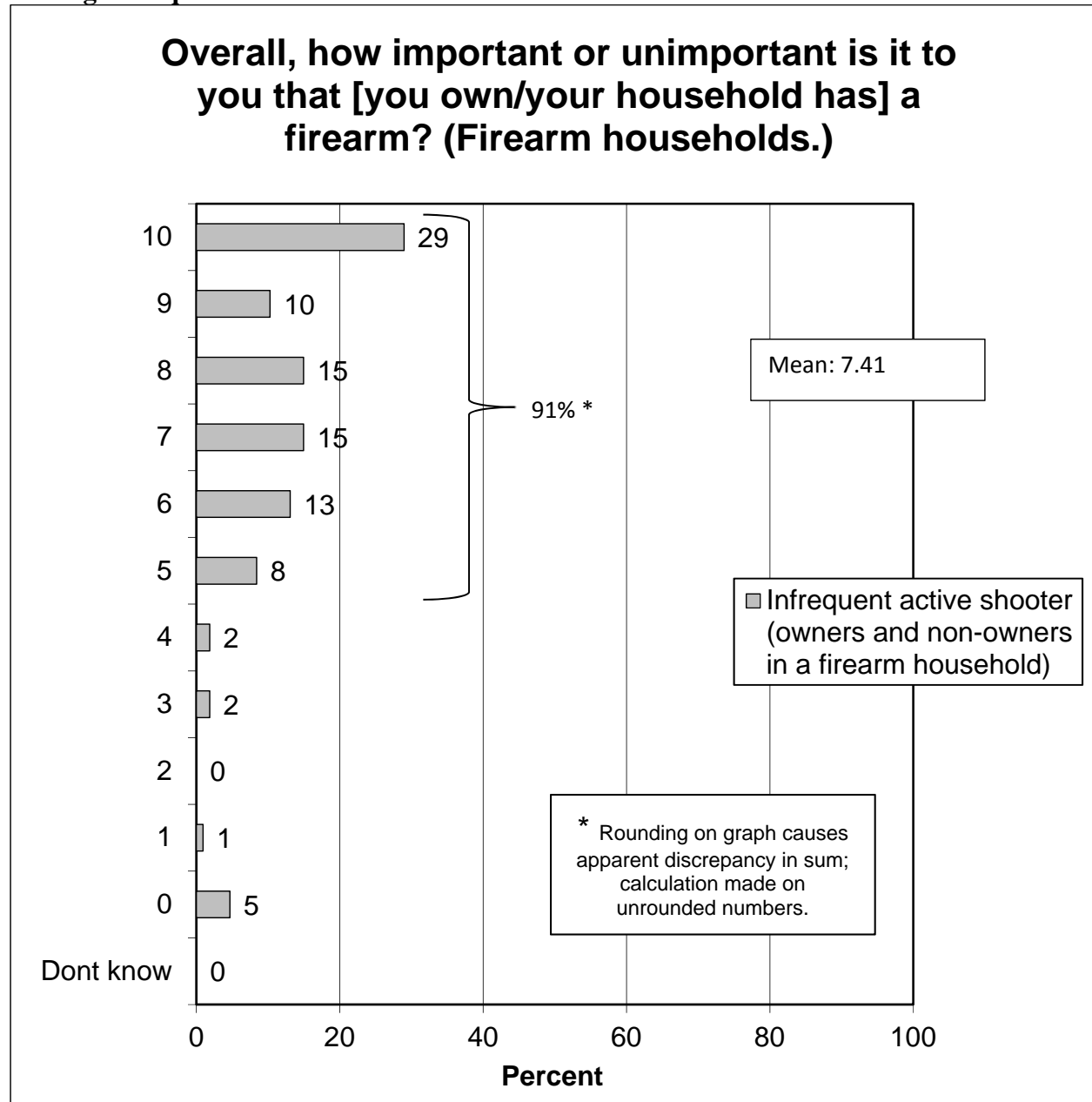


Figure 4.76. Political Leanings of Infrequent Active Shooters

Motivations for Acquiring Firearms and How They Were Acquired (Infrequent Active Shooters)

- **Infrequent active shooters give high ratings to the importance of owning a firearm.**
 - Among infrequent active shooters, 29% rate the importance of owning a firearm at “10” (on a 0 to 10 scale); the overwhelming majority (91%) give a rating of the midpoint or higher (Figure 4.77). The mean is 7.41.

Figure 4.77. Importance of Owning a Firearm or Having a Firearm in the Household Among Infrequent Active Shooters



- **Handguns predominate as the types of firearms owned by or that are in the household of infrequent active shooters. Just under two-thirds own a handgun or have one in their household.**
 - Modern handgun is the most common firearm owned/in the household (60%) (Figure 4.78). Meanwhile, 35% own/have in the household a modern rifle, and 27% own/have in the household a modern shotgun.
 - About a third of people who own/have a rifle in their household (32%) own/have at least one AR-platform rifle (Figure 4.79).

Figure 4.78. Types of Firearms Owned by/in the Household of Infrequent Active Shooters

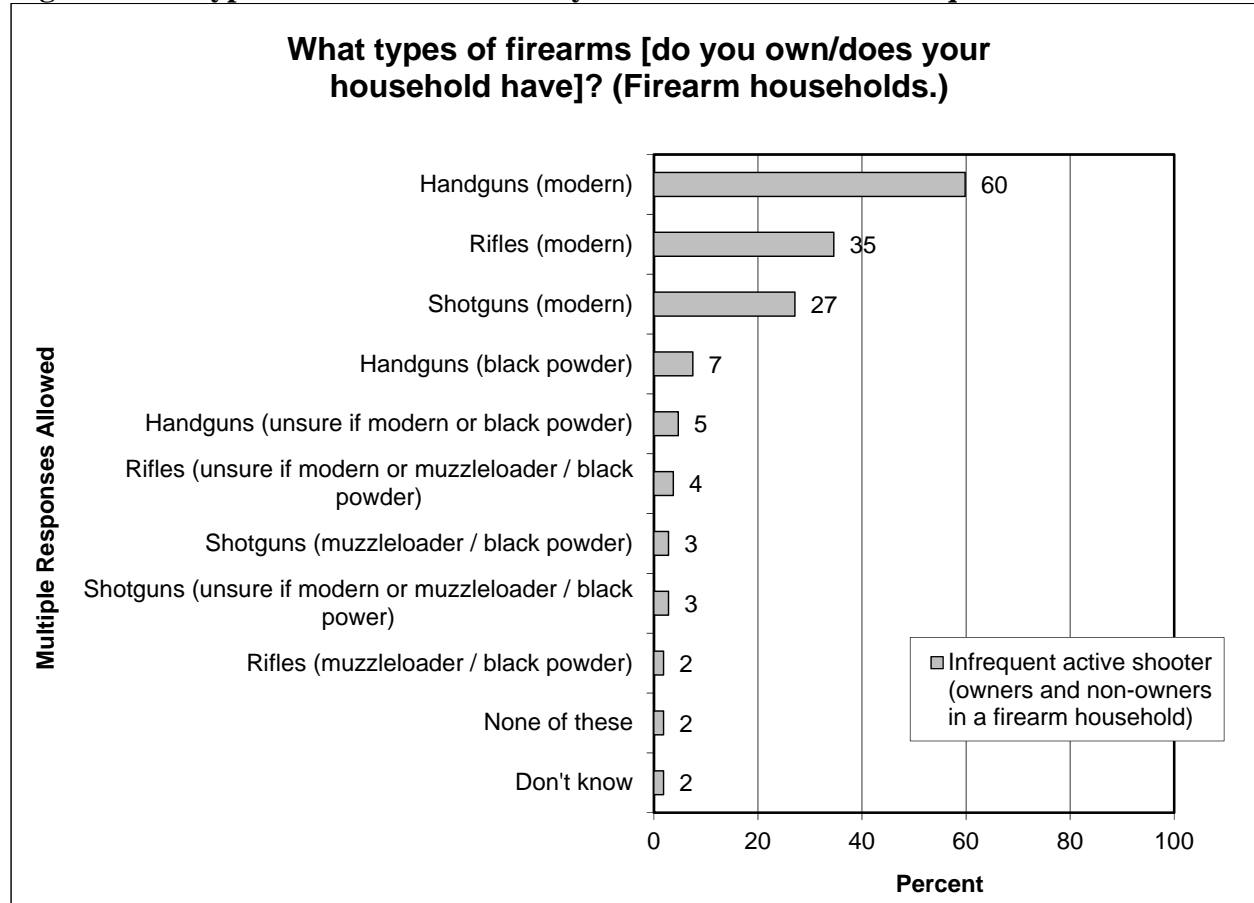
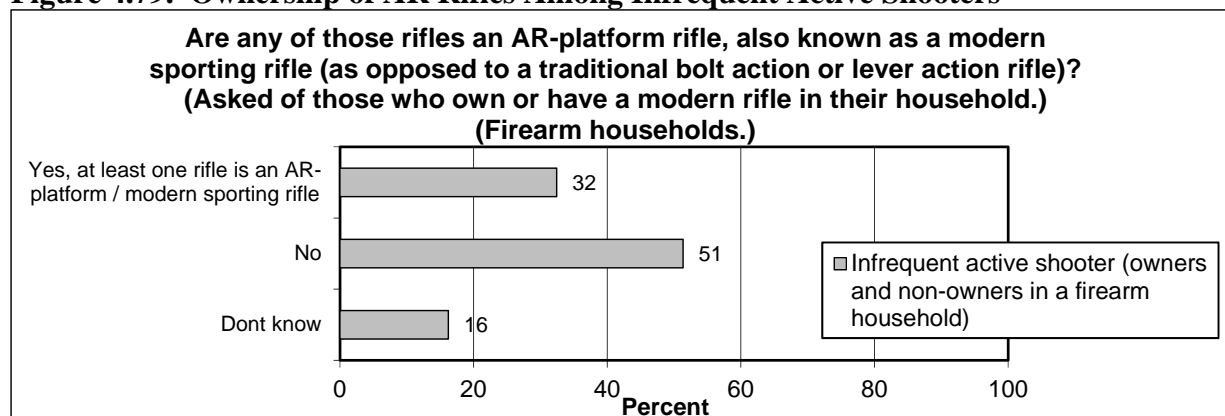


Figure 4.79. Ownership of AR Rifles Among Infrequent Active Shooters



- **Just over half of this group got any of their firearms by purchase; a third had firearms given to them, and a third had inherited firearms.**
 - Slightly more than half of infrequent active shooters had purchased at least one of their firearms (53%) (Figure 4.80). Additionally, 33% had been given firearms, and 31% had inherited firearms. Further analysis found that 42% of this group had gotten all of their firearms either through gift or inheritance (i.e., did not purchase any).
 - Fathers and spouses are the most common people who have given firearms: 57% indicated their fathers, and 14% indicated their spouses (Figure 4.81).

Figure 4.80. How Firearms Acquired Among Infrequent Active Shooters

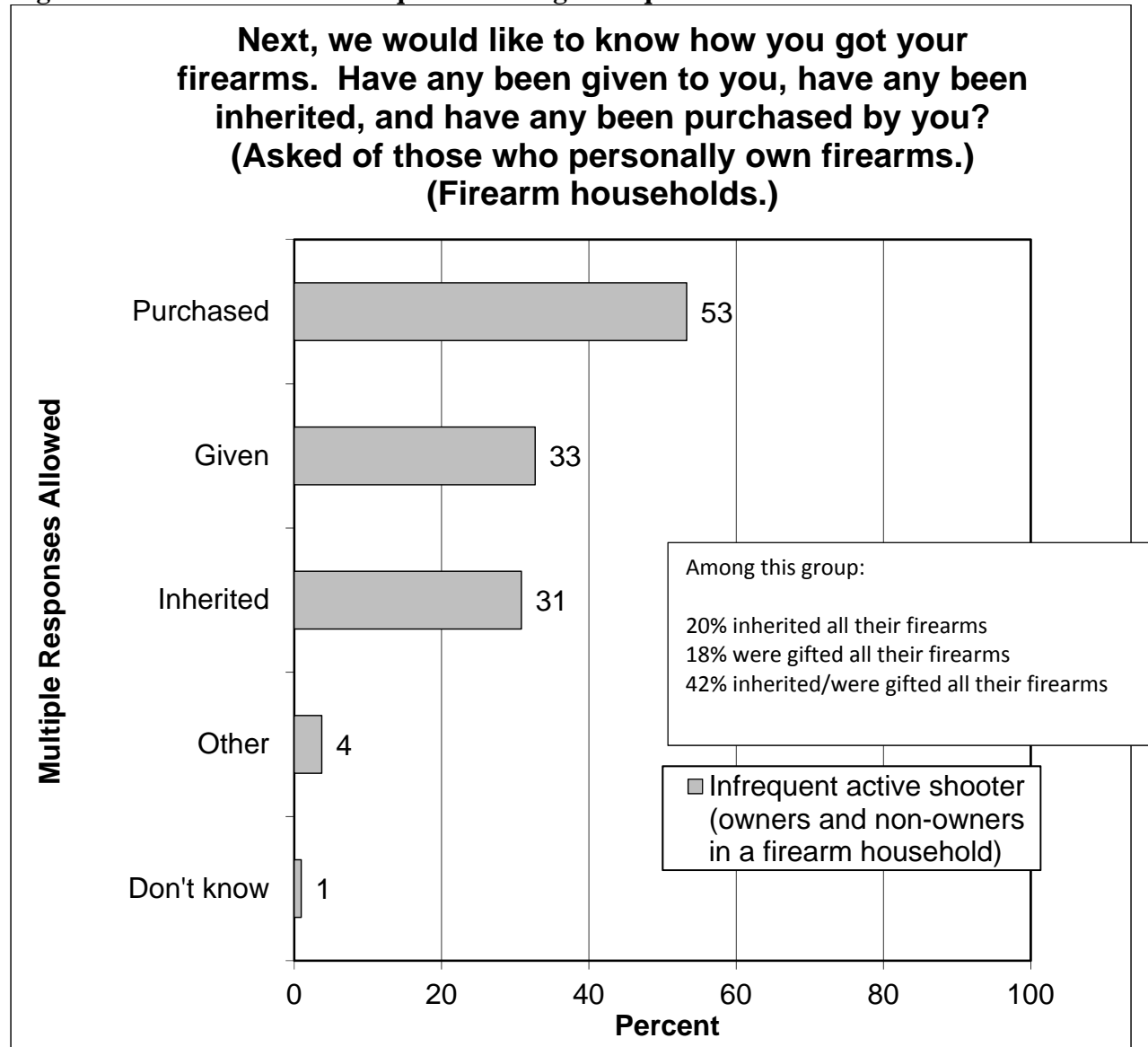
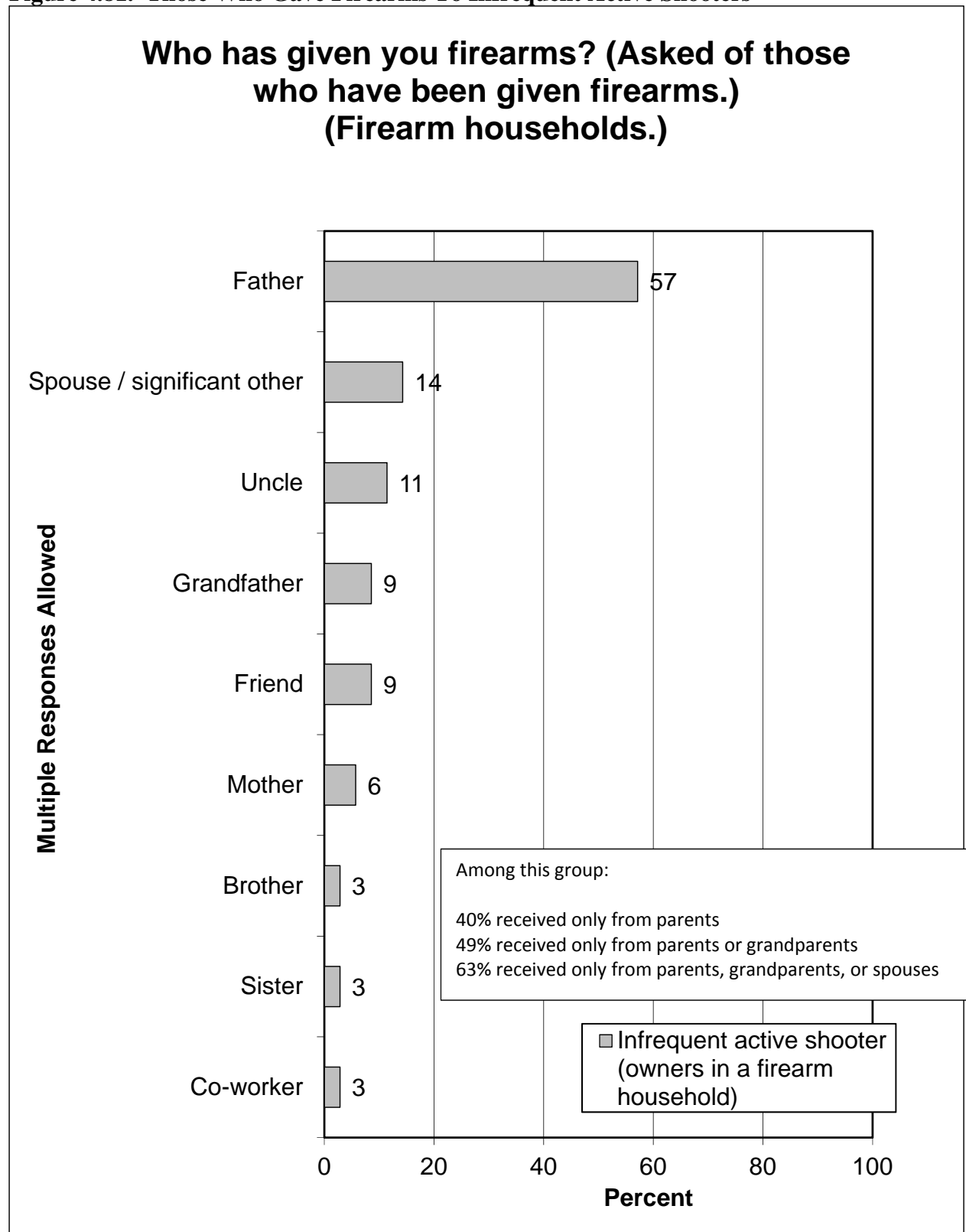
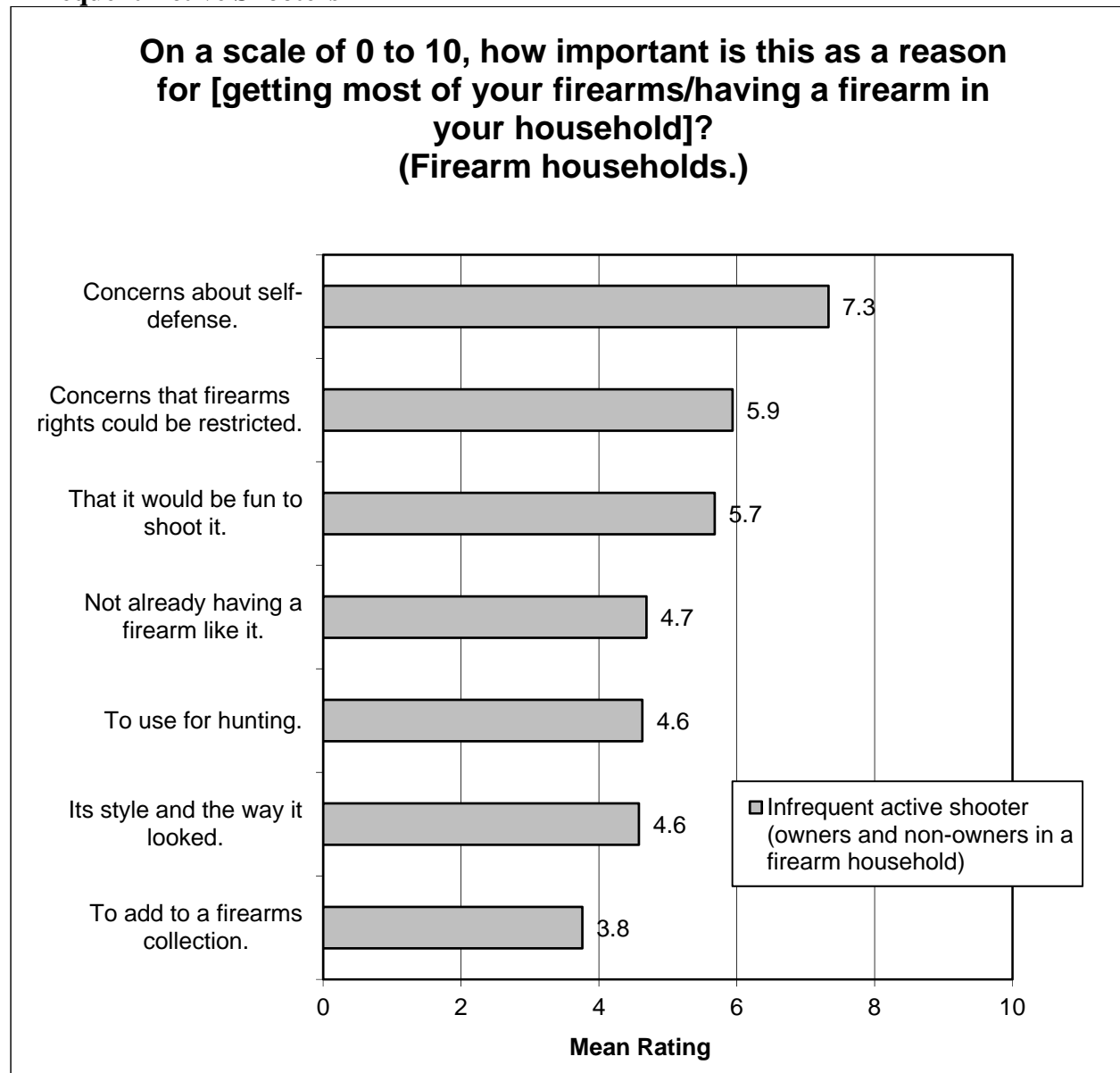


Figure 4.81. Those Who Gave Firearms To Infrequent Active Shooters

A list of possible motivations for getting a firearm or having a firearm in the household was presented to respondents. The survey asked them to rate the importance of each motivation as a reason that they personally obtained most of their firearms or that their household has firearms. The question used a 0 to 10 scale, with 10 being the most important.

- **Three reasons predominate as motivations for getting or having a firearm: self-defense, concerns about firearm rights, and having fun shooting—the only reasons with means higher than the midpoint.**
- The mean rating of the importance of self-defense as a motive is at 7.3 (on a scale of 0 to 10, with 10 being the most important), the mean for concerns about firearm rights is at 5.9, and the mean for the fun of shooting is at 5.7 (Figure 4.82). At the bottom are for a collection or simply because of the firearm's style and looks.

Figure 4.82. Reasons for Getting Firearms or Having Firearms in Their Household Among Infrequent Active Shooters

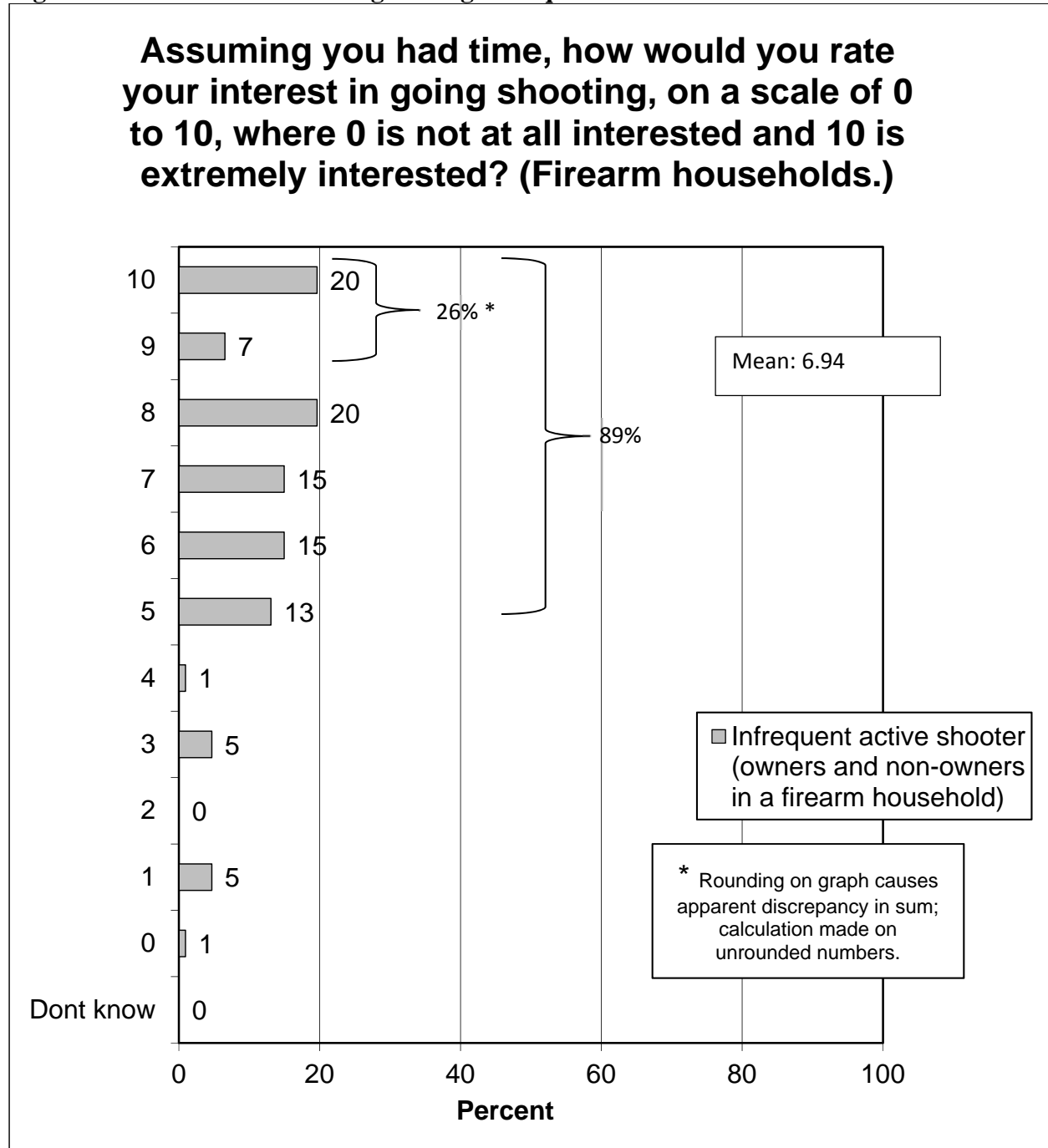


Interest in Sport Shooting and Opinions on Strategies To Encourage Interest (Infrequent Active Shooters)

➤ Among infrequent active shooters, interest in going shooting is high.

- More than a quarter (24%) rate their interest as a “9” or “10”; the overwhelming majority give a rating of the midpoint or higher (89% give a rating in this range) (Figure 4.83).

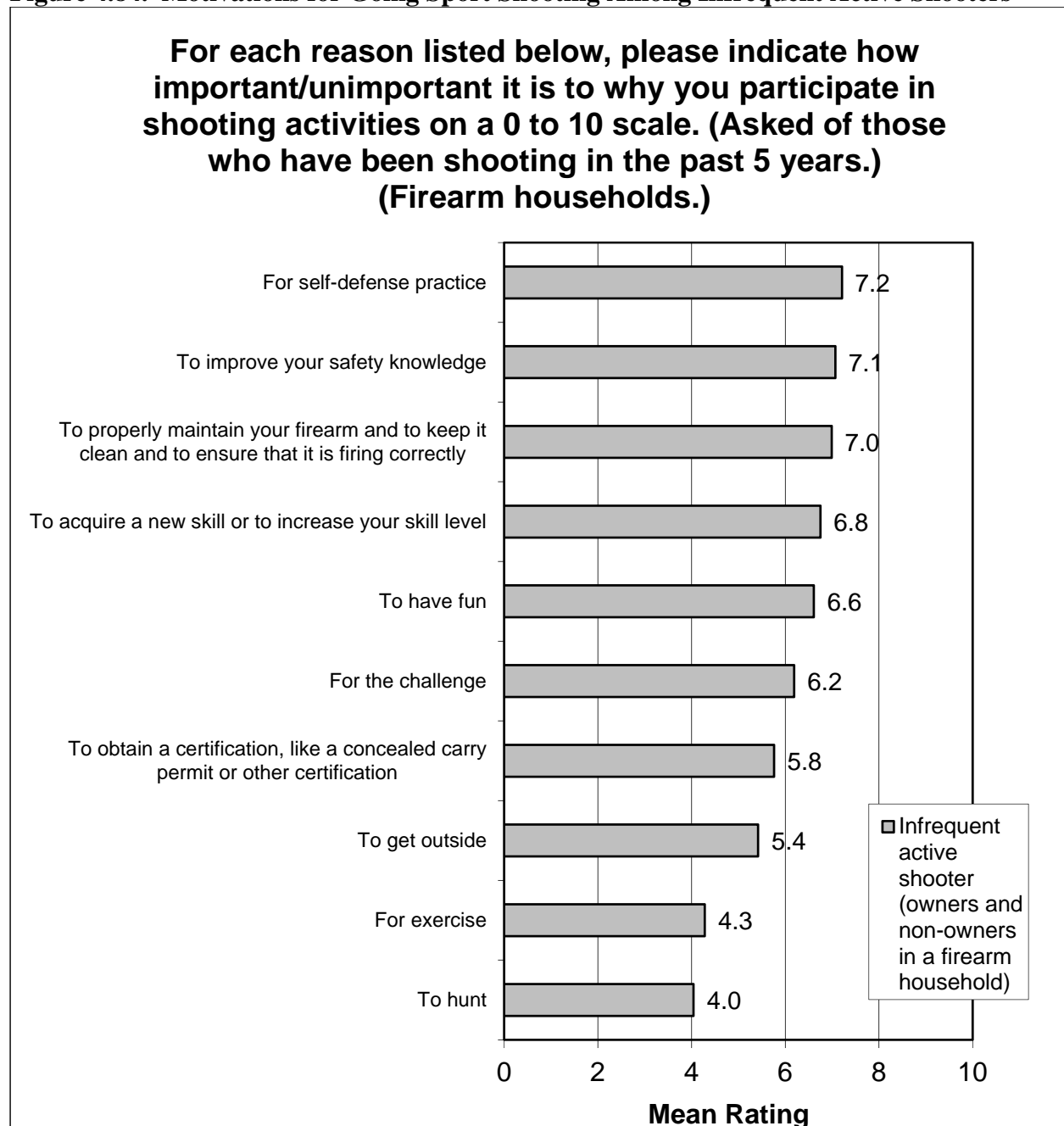
Figure 4.83. Interest in Shooting Among Infrequent Active Shooters



The survey presented a list of potential reasons that active shooters had gone sport shooting, among those who had gone sport shooting in the previous 5 years. For each reason, respondents gave a rating from 0 to 10, where 0 was that it was not at all important and 10 was that it was extremely important as a reason for going sport shooting.

- **Self-defense practice, to improve safety knowledge, and to properly maintain the firearm are at the top of the list as reasons this group went sport shooting.**
 - Self-defense practice (mean rating of 7.2) was at the top, closely followed by to improve safety knowledge (7.1) and to properly maintain the firearm (7.0) (Figure 4.84).

Figure 4.84. Motivations for Going Sport Shooting Among Infrequent Active Shooters



The survey presented a list of incentives to encourage sport shooting participation. Respondents indicated whether each would make them much more interested, somewhat more interested, or a little more interested in going sport shooting, or whether it would not affect their interest level at all.

- **Free firearms training at a range and knowing that effective self-defense takes practice are the two incentives at the top of the list for infrequent active shooters.**
 - Among this group, 50% said it would make them much more interested in shooting if there was a range that offered free firearms training, and 43% said the same about knowing that effective self-defense requires regular practice (Figure 4.85).
 - At the bottom for this group is to learn how to hunt (21%).
 - Three graphs are shown: the percentage saying that the incentives would make them much more likely (Figure 4.85); the percentage saying that the incentives would make them much, somewhat, or a little more likely (Figure 4.86); and the percentage saying that the incentives would not affect their interest at all (Figure 4.87).

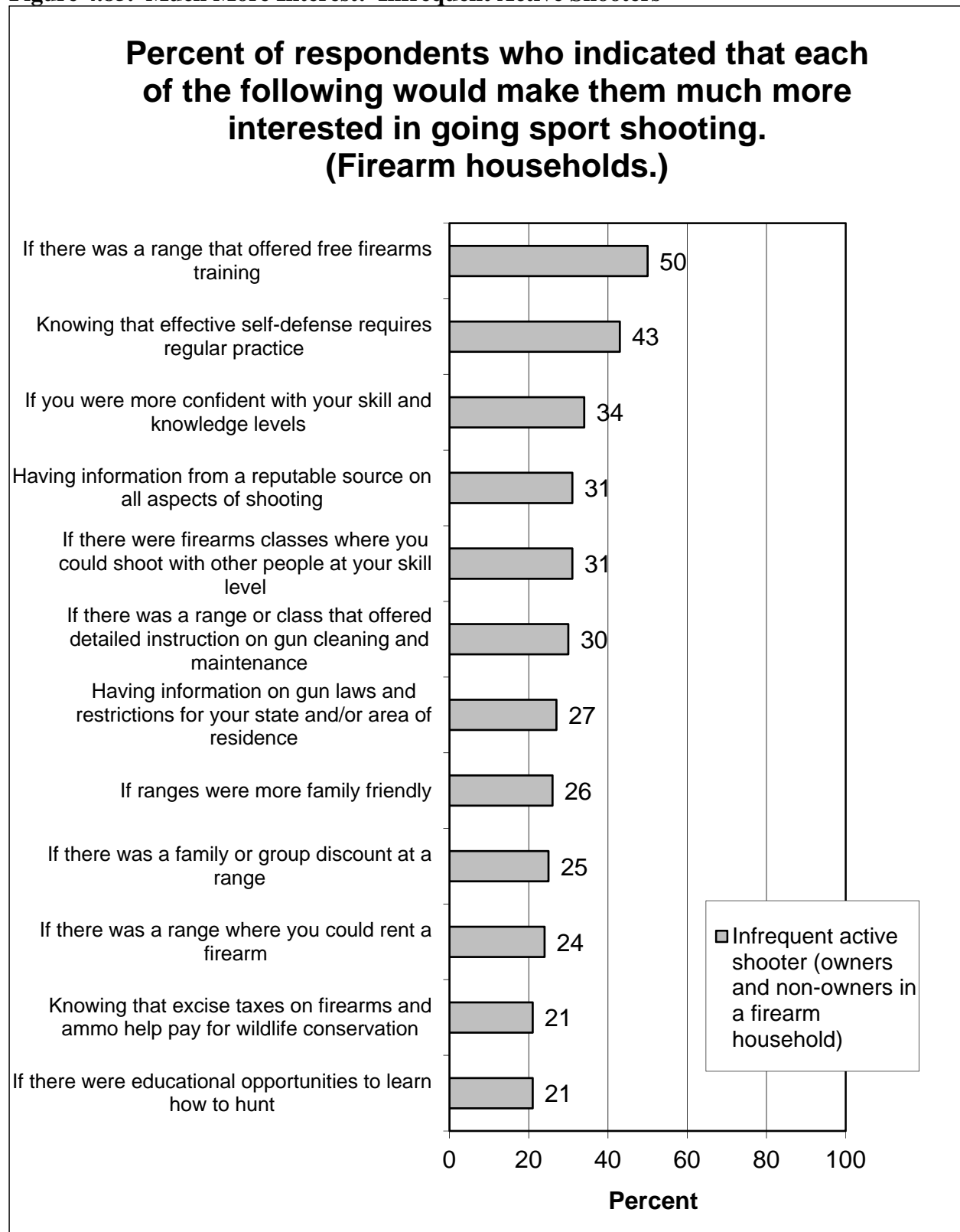
Figure 4.85. Much More Interest: Infrequent Active Shooters

Figure 4.86. Much More, Somewhat More, or a Little More Interest: Infrequent Active Shooters

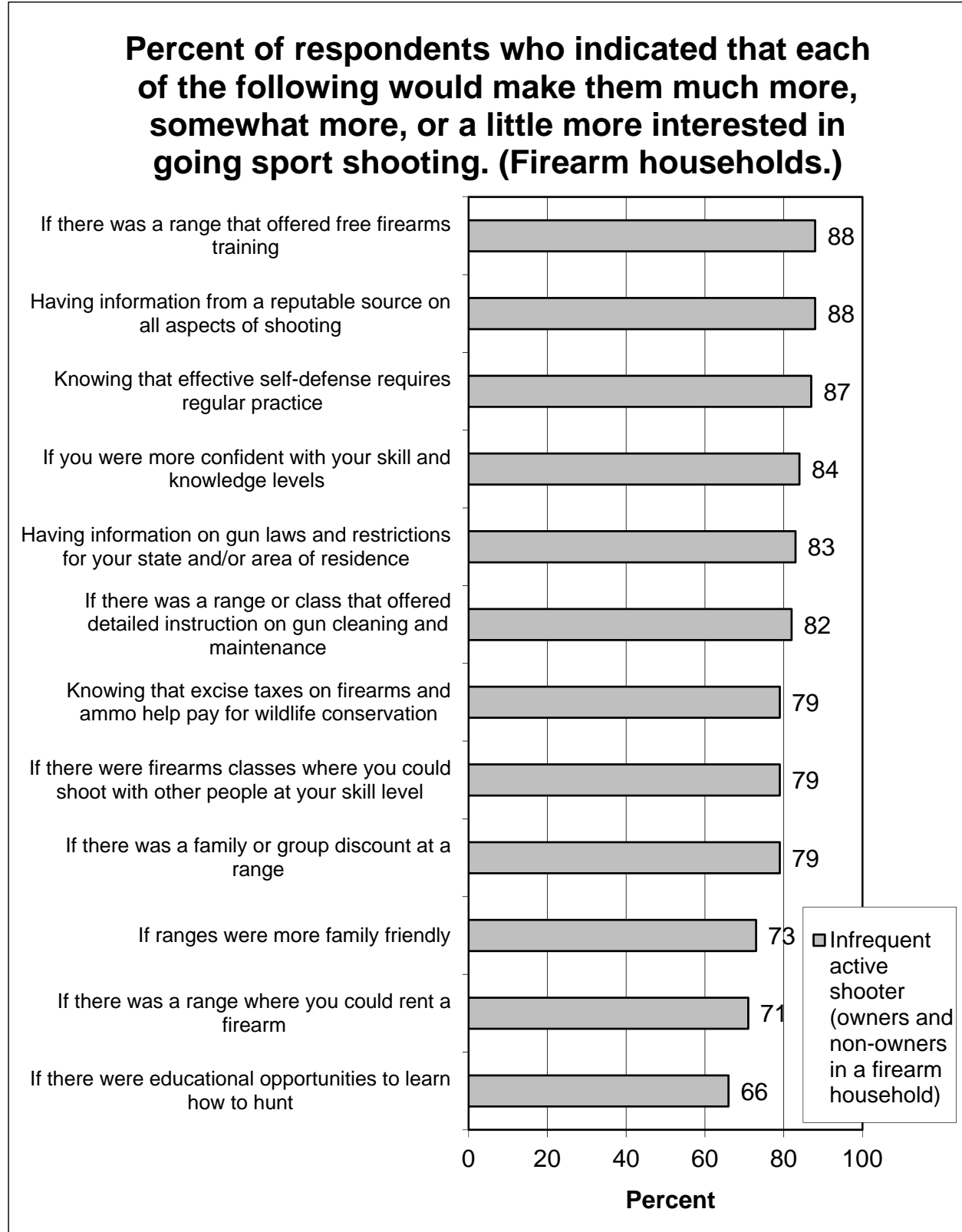
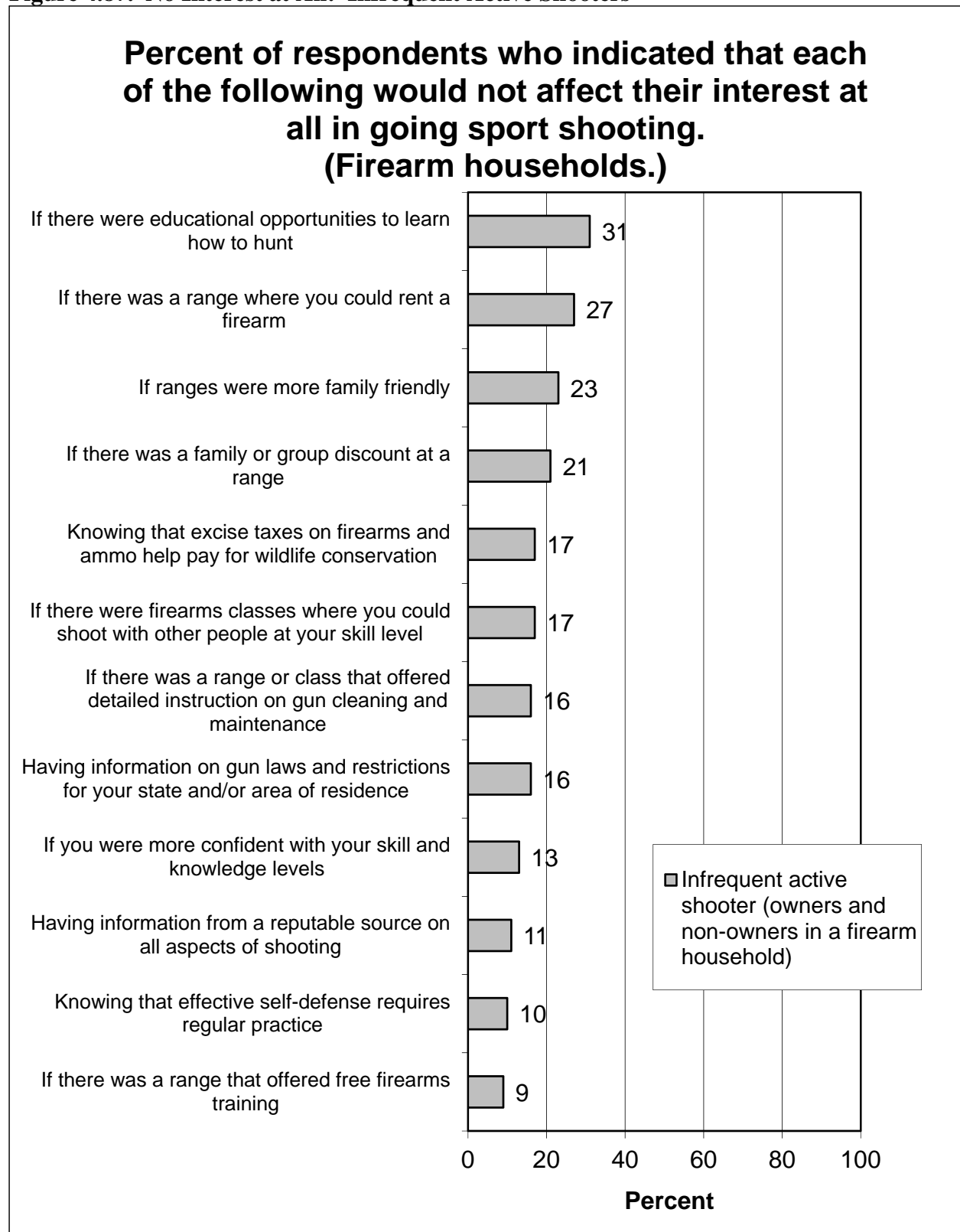


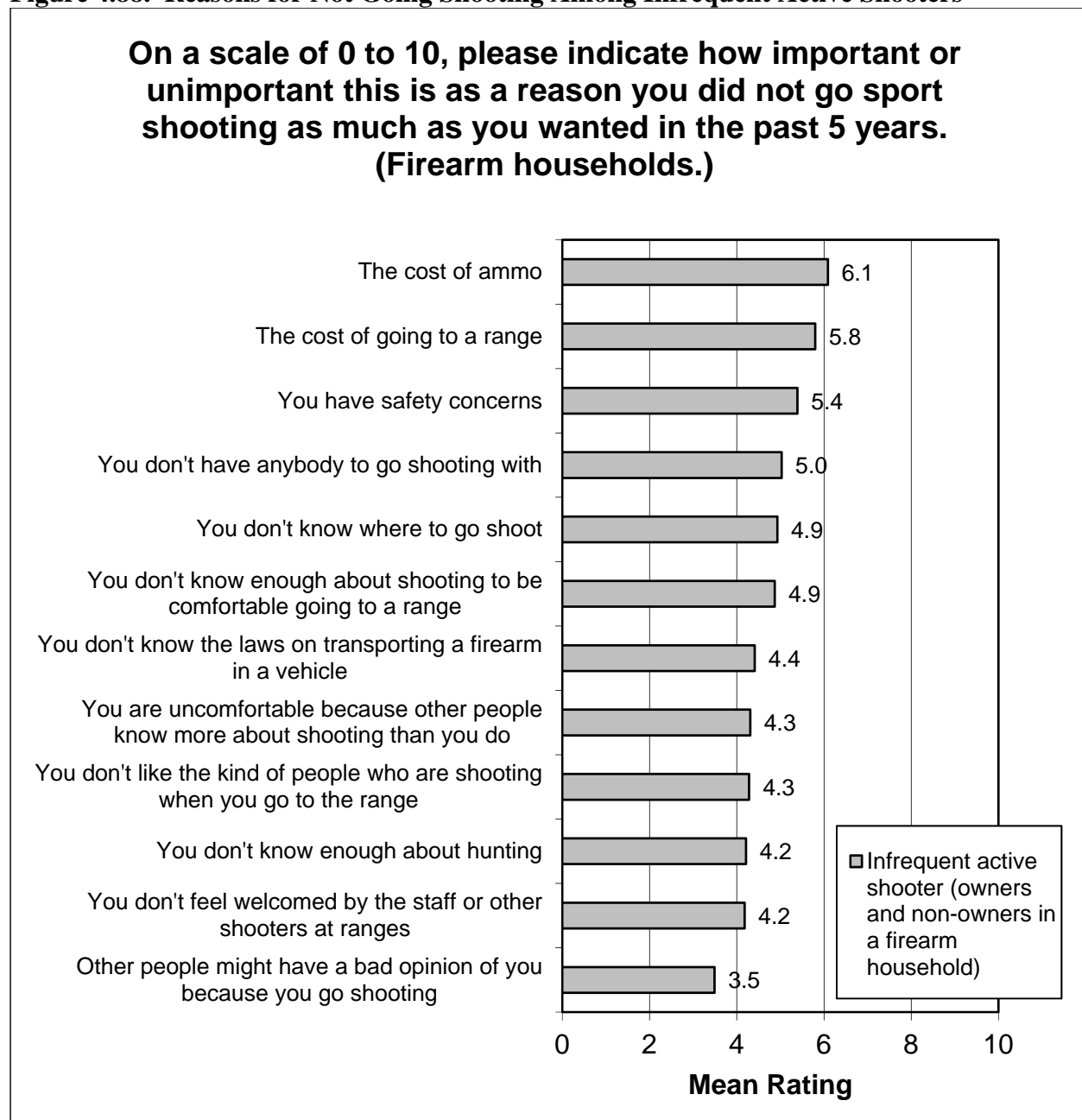
Figure 4.87. No Interest at All: Infrequent Active Shooters

Constraints To Sport Shooting Participation (Infrequent Active Shooters)

Another series of questions asked about constraints (using a rating of 0 to 10): respondents rated the importance of various potential reasons for *not* going sport shooting in the past 5 years as much as they wanted.

- **Costs, of ammo and to go to the range, and safety concerns are the biggest constraints.**
 - Three items are at the top notably higher than the rest: the cost of ammo (6.1), the cost of going to the range (5.8), and safety concerns (5.4) (Figure 4.88). All others have means at the midpoint or lower.

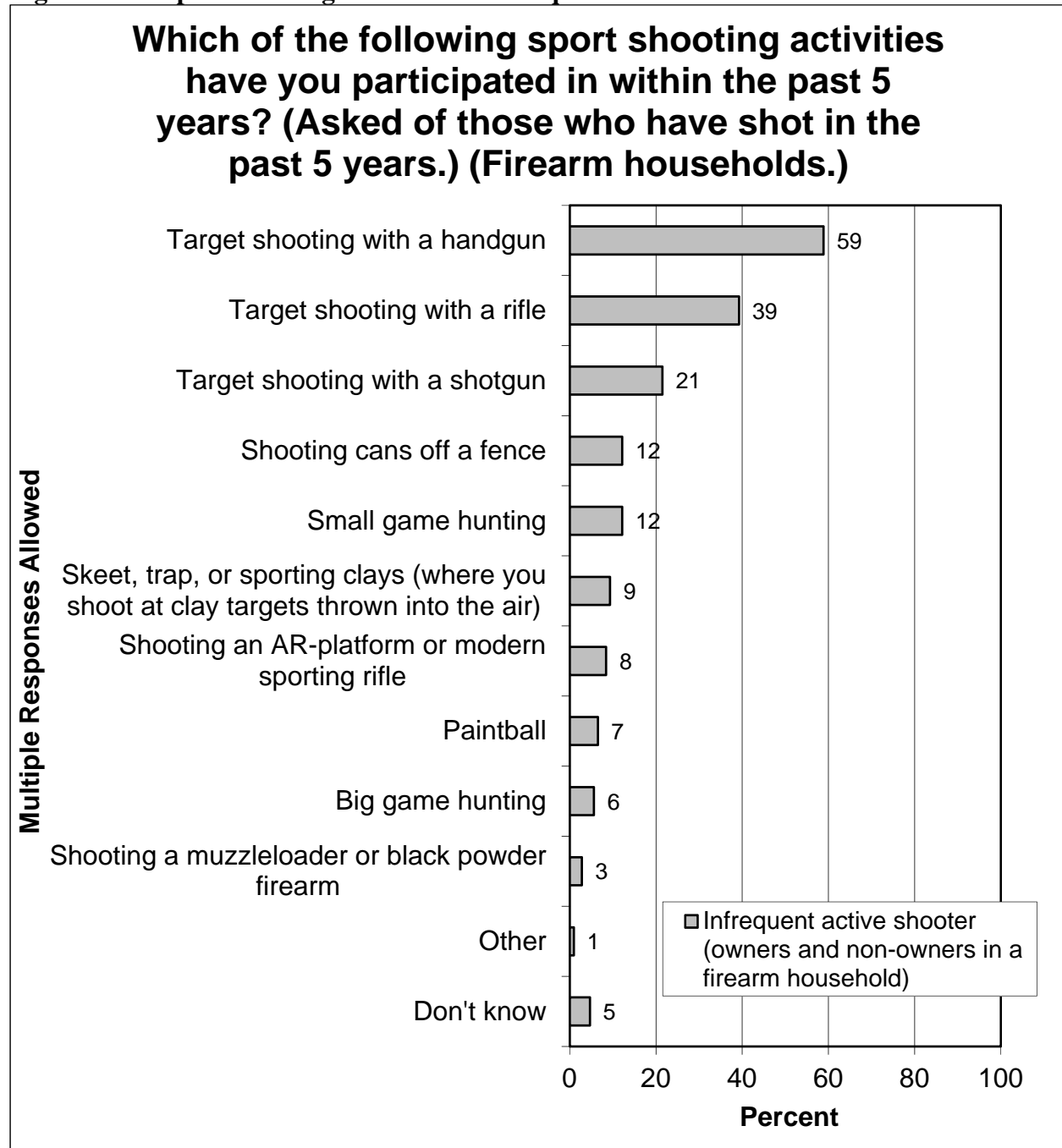
Figure 4.88. Reasons for Not Going Shooting Among Infrequent Active Shooters



Participation in Shooting Activities (Infrequent Active Shooters)

- The majority of infrequent active shooters went target shooting with a handgun in the past 5 years. A robust percentage went target shooting with a rifle.
 - The majority (59%) of this group went target shooting with a handgun, the *only* activity done by a majority (Figure 4.89). Other notable activities include target shooting with a rifle (39%) and target shooting with a shotgun (21%).

Figure 4.89. Sport Shooting Activities of Infrequent Active Shooters



A LOOK AT NOTABLE DIFFERENCES AMONG GROUPS

This report previously examined each of three subsets of the general population. This section now looks how those three groups compare to the rest of the groups that the general population comprises. This section looks specifically at demographic characteristics, motivations, likely interest in shooting, constraints to shooting, and participation in shooting.

In these comparisons, the five groups previously discussed are all included on the graphs. To refresh the reader's memory, the five groups were defined based on the following.

People in firearm households can be categorized (Table 4.4) based on their frequency of shooting (working from the most avid down to those who have never shot in their lifetimes) and whether they own a firearm or are simply non-owners in a firearm household.

Table 4.4. Categorization of the Those in *Firearm Households* According to Frequency of Shooting and Ownership of Firearms—Matrix (Reproduced From Previous in the Report)

	Shot a firearm in past 5 years; shoots 3 or more times per year	Shot a firearm in past 5 years; shoots less than 3 times per year	Did not shoot a firearm in past 5 years but has ever shot	Has never shot a firearm
Owns a firearm	Avid active shooter, firearm owner	Infrequent active shooter, firearm owner	Inactive shooter, firearm owner	Non-participant, firearm owner
Does not own a firearm	Avid active shooter, non-owner in a firearm household	Infrequent active shooter, non-owner in a firearm household	Inactive shooter, non-owner in a firearm household	Non-participant, non-owner in a firearm household

To help make sense of the groups in the matrix, some of the groups were combined for the analyses, leaving five groups.

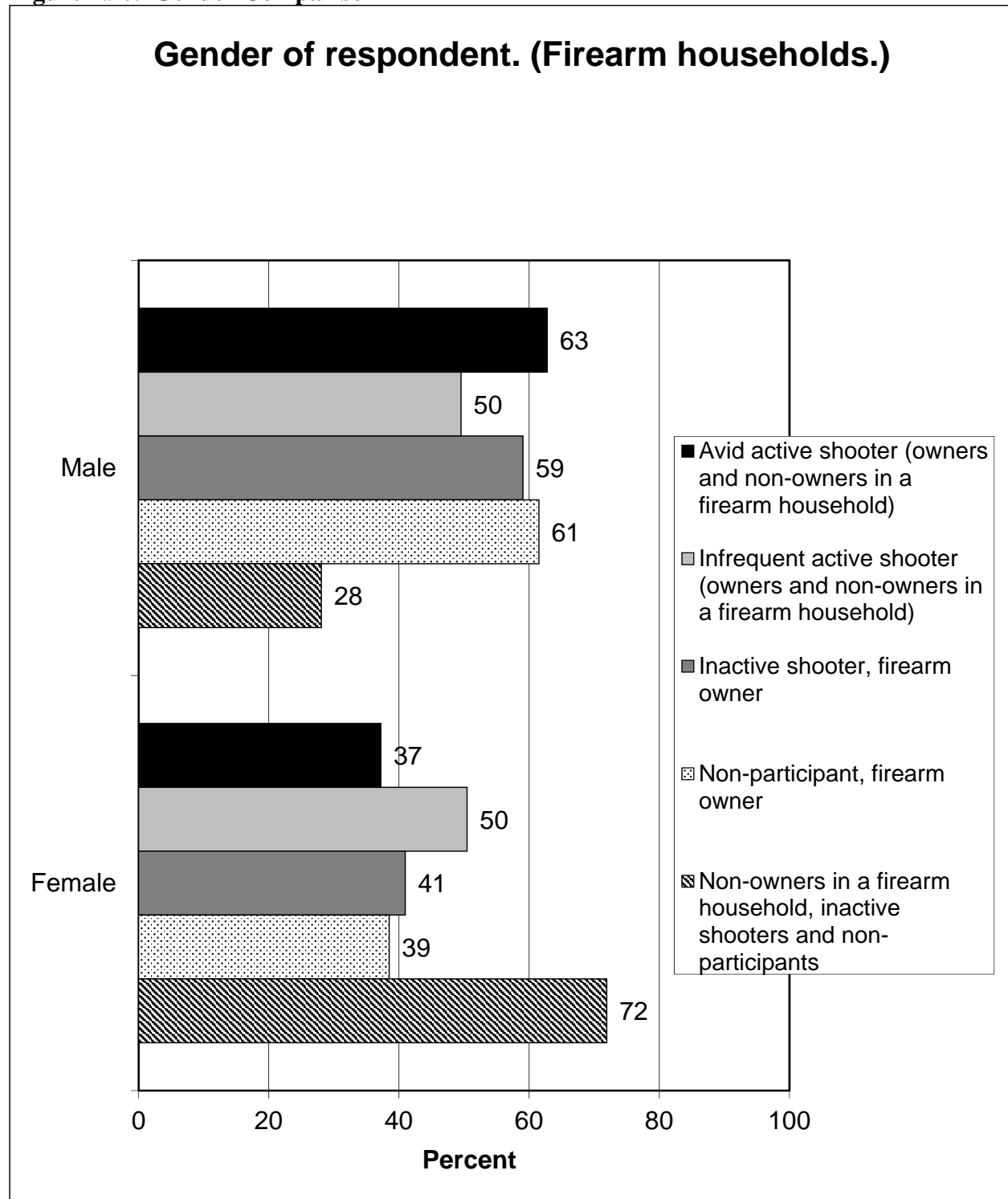
- Avid active shooters (whether they own a firearm or not) were combined into one group.
- Infrequent active shooters (whether they own a firearm or not) were combined into one group.
- Inactive shooters who are firearm owners were analyzed on their own.
- Non-participants who are firearm owners were also analyzed on their own.
- The remaining non-owners (both inactive shooters and non-participants) were combined into one group.

These groups are shown on the graphs with the five bars in the same order as the groups are listed above. On questions that not all groups received in the survey, these comparison graphs will have fewer than five bars.

Demographic Characteristics and Data: Differences Among Groups

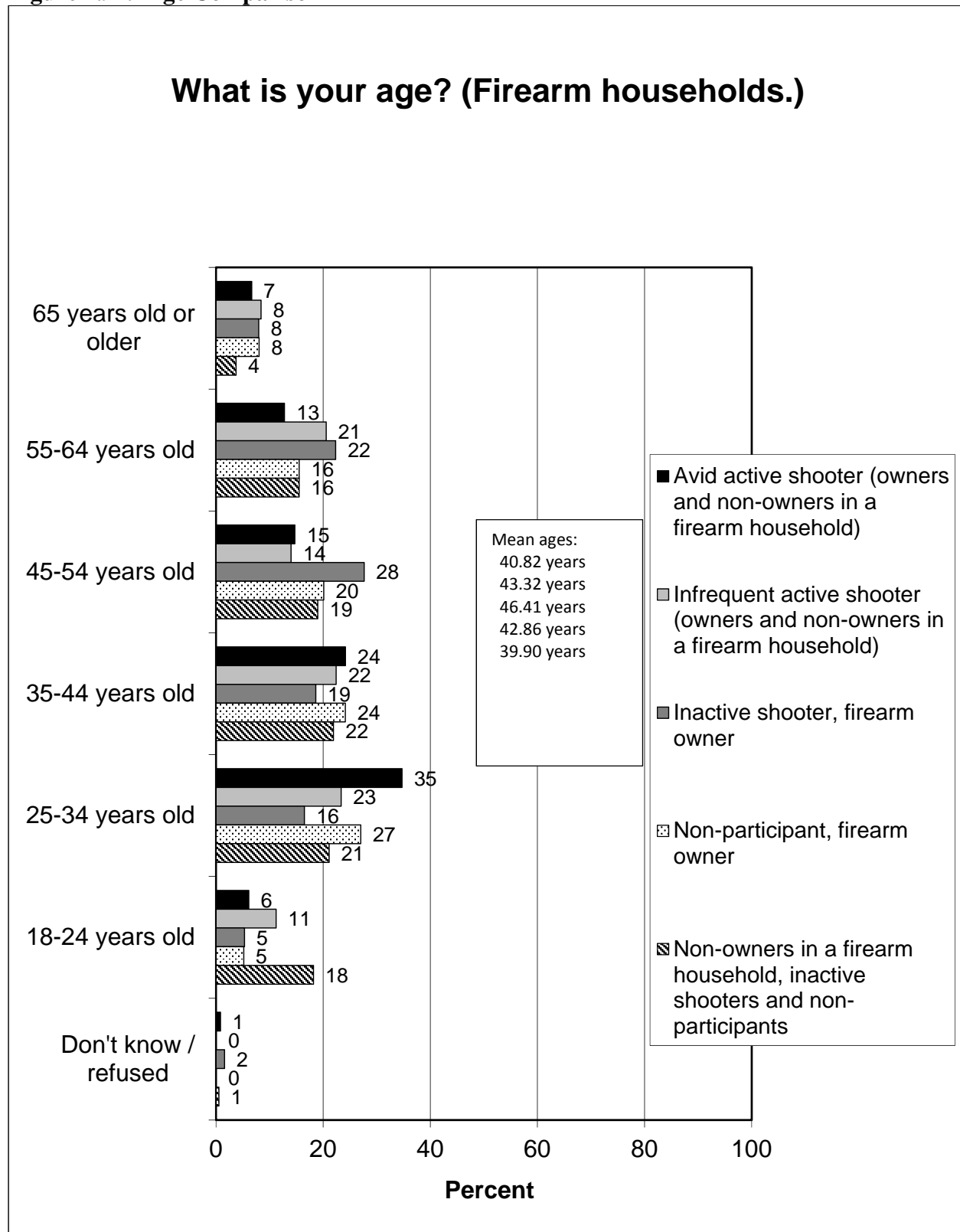
- The most male of the groups are the avid active shooters (with almost the same proportion of males being in the inactive shooter, firearm owner group and the non-participant, firearm owner group. Non-owners in a firearm household who are not active shooters are the most female of the five groups (Figure 4.90).

Figure 4.90. Gender Comparison



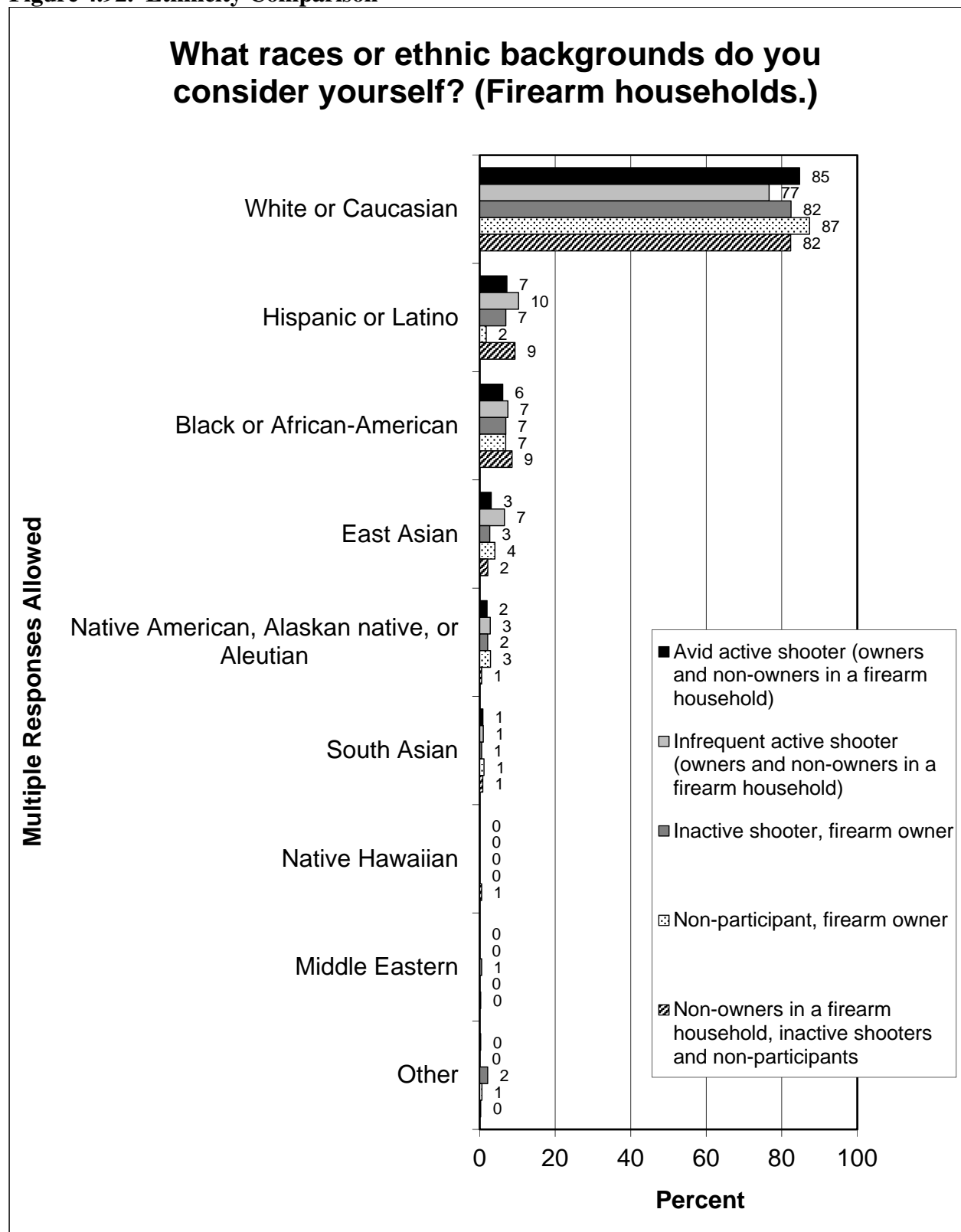
- Inactive shooters who are firearm owners have the oldest mean age, markedly older than active shooters (Figure 4.91).

Figure 4.91. Age Comparison



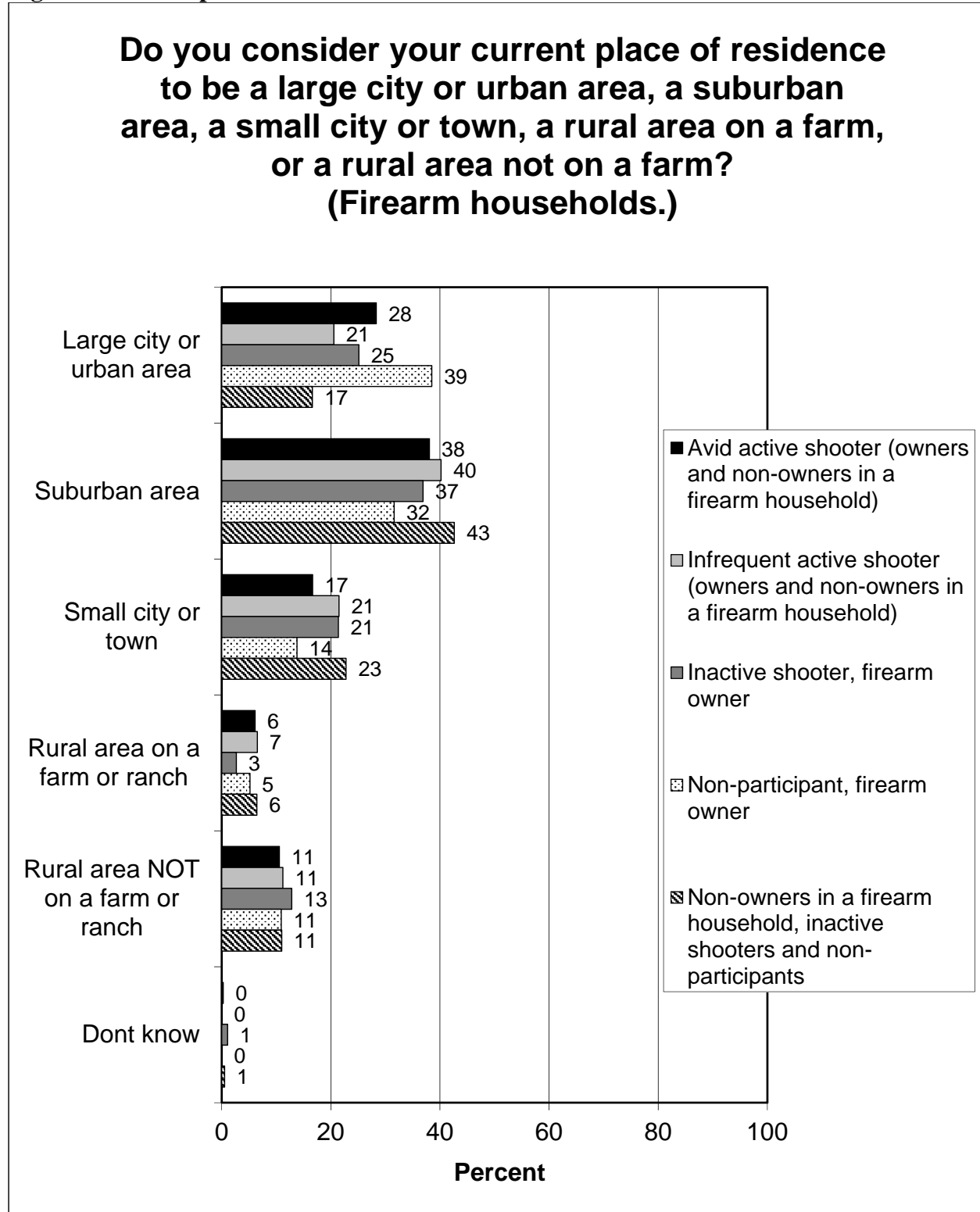
- The group with the highest proportion of non-whites is the infrequent active shooter group (Figure 4.92).

Figure 4.92. Ethnicity Comparison



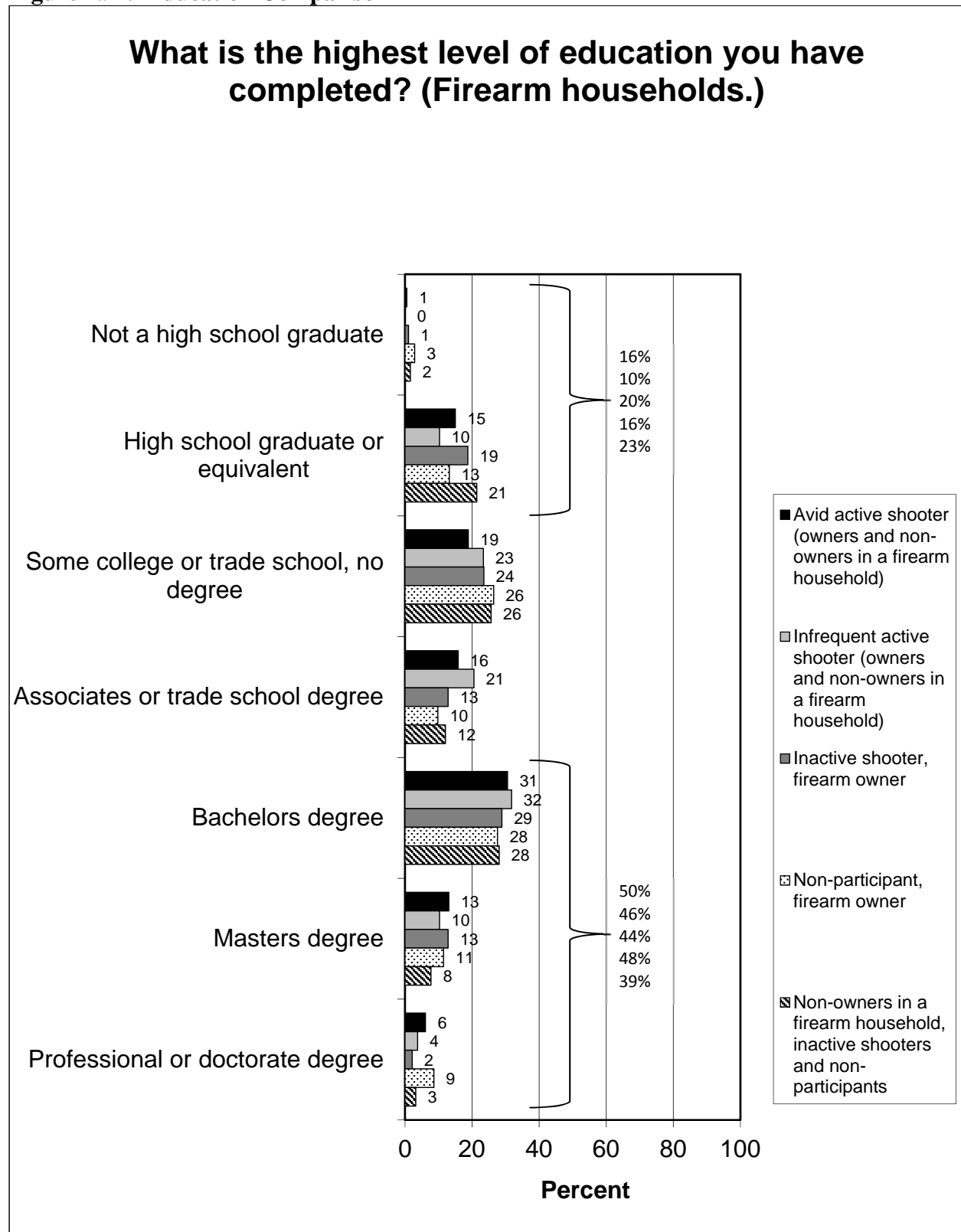
- Non-participants who are firearm owners are the most urban (large city/urban area or suburban) (Figure 4.93). The proportions that are rural are about the same among all the groups.

Figure 4.93. Comparison of Residential Areas



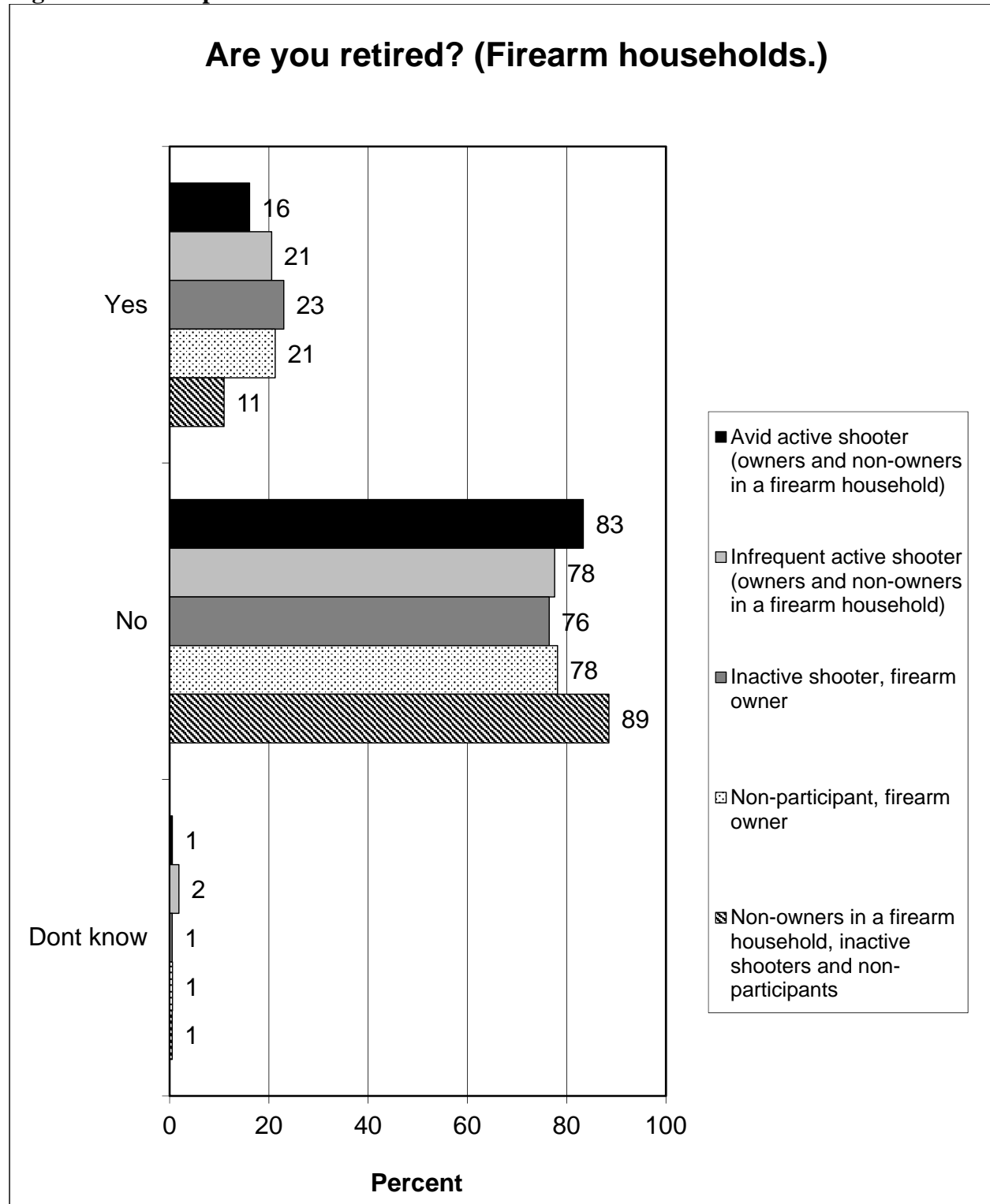
- Avid active shooters are the most educated; non-owners in a firearm household who are not active shooters are the least educated (Figure 4.94).

Figure 4.94. Education Comparison



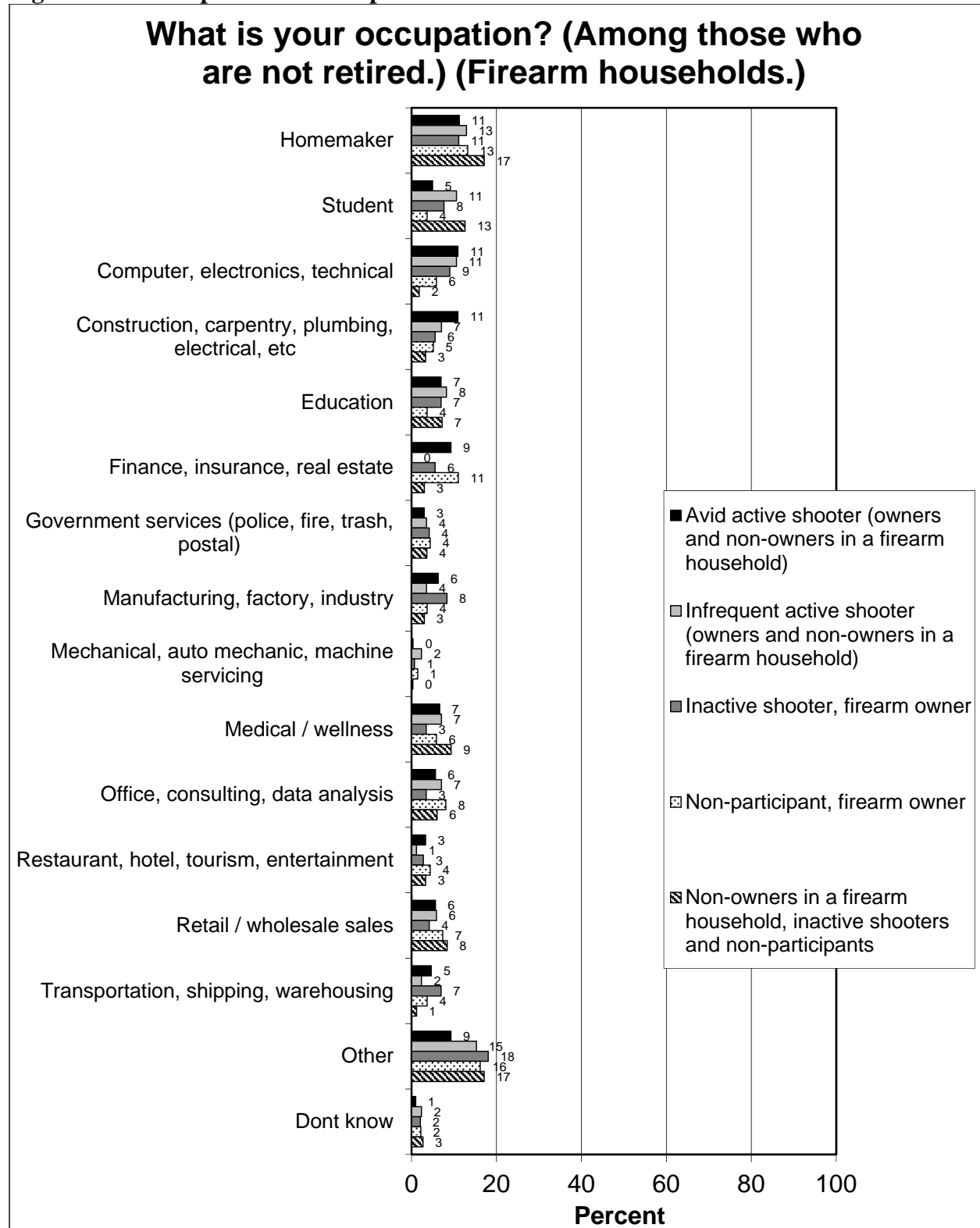
- The three groups of most interest in this project—infrequent active shooters; inactive shooters, firearm owners; and non-participants, firearm owners—have the highest rates of retirement (Figure 4.95).

Figure 4.95. Comparison of Retirement



- The graph shows occupations of those in the various groups; there is a high percentage of non-owners who are not active shooters being in the homemaker or student occupations, relative to the other groups (Figure 4.96).

Figure 4.96. Comparison of Occupation



- Active avid shooters are the most likely to have children living in their household; the next group most likely to have children is those identified as non-participant, firearm owner (Figures 4.97 and 4.98).

Figure 4.97. Comparison of Minor Children in the Household

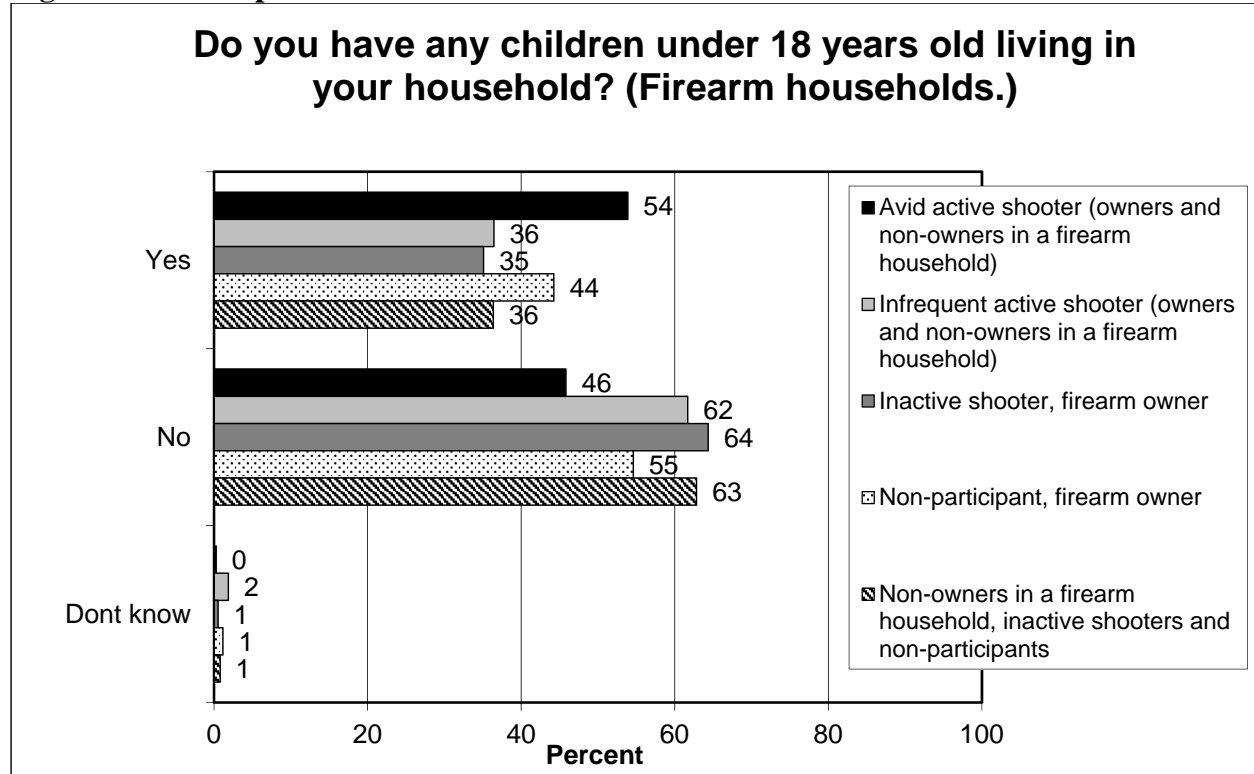
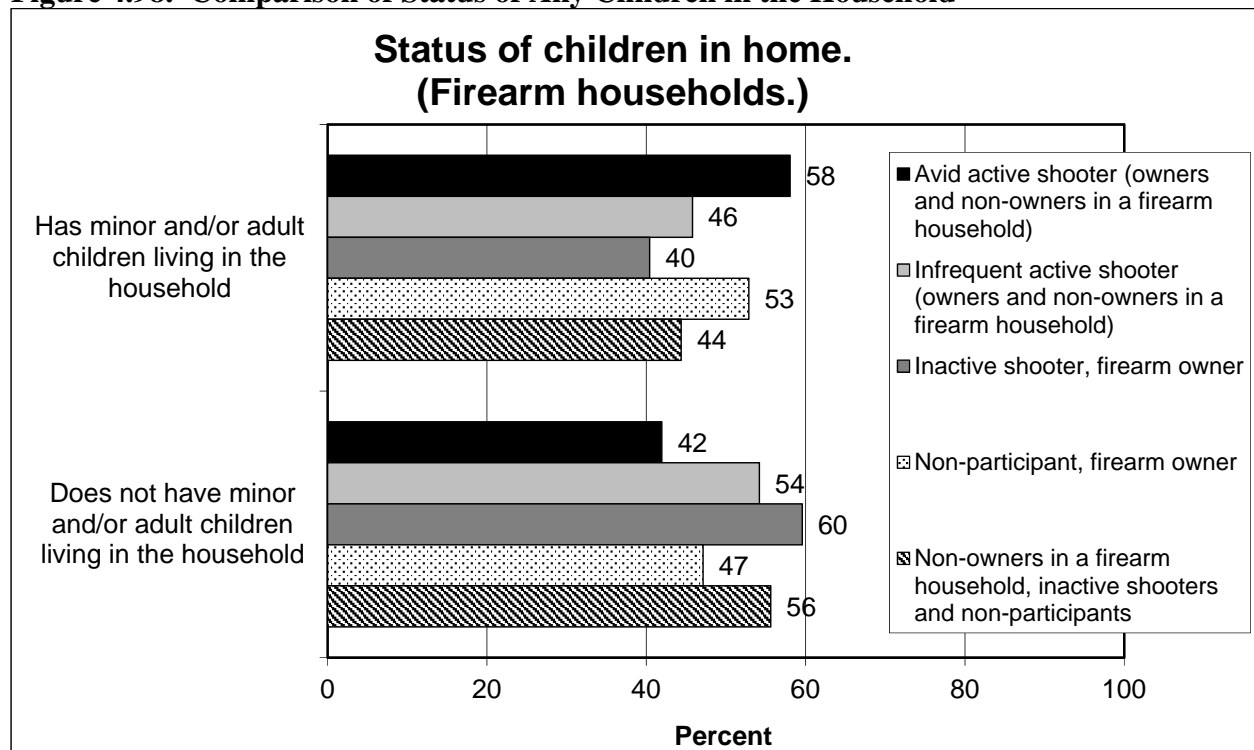
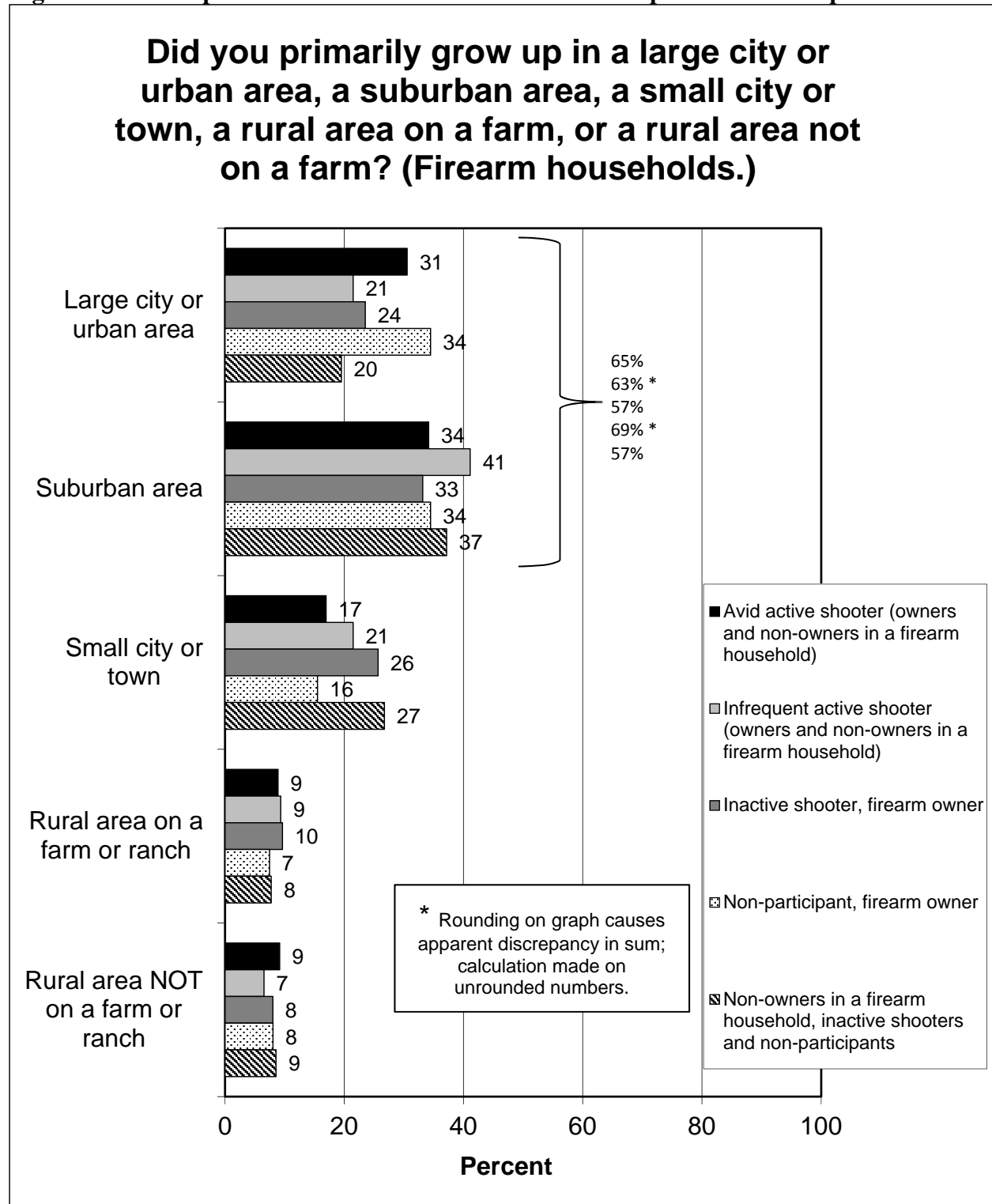


Figure 4.98. Comparison of Status of Any Children in the Household



- The rural part of the continuum is about the same among the groups; the differences lie in the urban, suburban, and small city/town part of the continuum (Figure 4.99). While non-participants who are firearm owners make up the group who are the most urban growing up, next in the ranking is the group made up of avid active shooters.

Figure 4.99. Comparison of Residential Area in Which Respondent Grew Up



- Inactive shooters who are firearm owners make up the group that is most polarized in the length of time that they have had a firearm—they have nearly equal percentages in the 5 years or less range and the over 25 years range (Figure 4.100). Also, in general, they have owned their firearms longer than any other group, including avid active shooters. Figure 4.101 shows the length of time the household had a firearm among non-owners.

Figure 4.100. Comparison of Length of Time Owning a Firearm

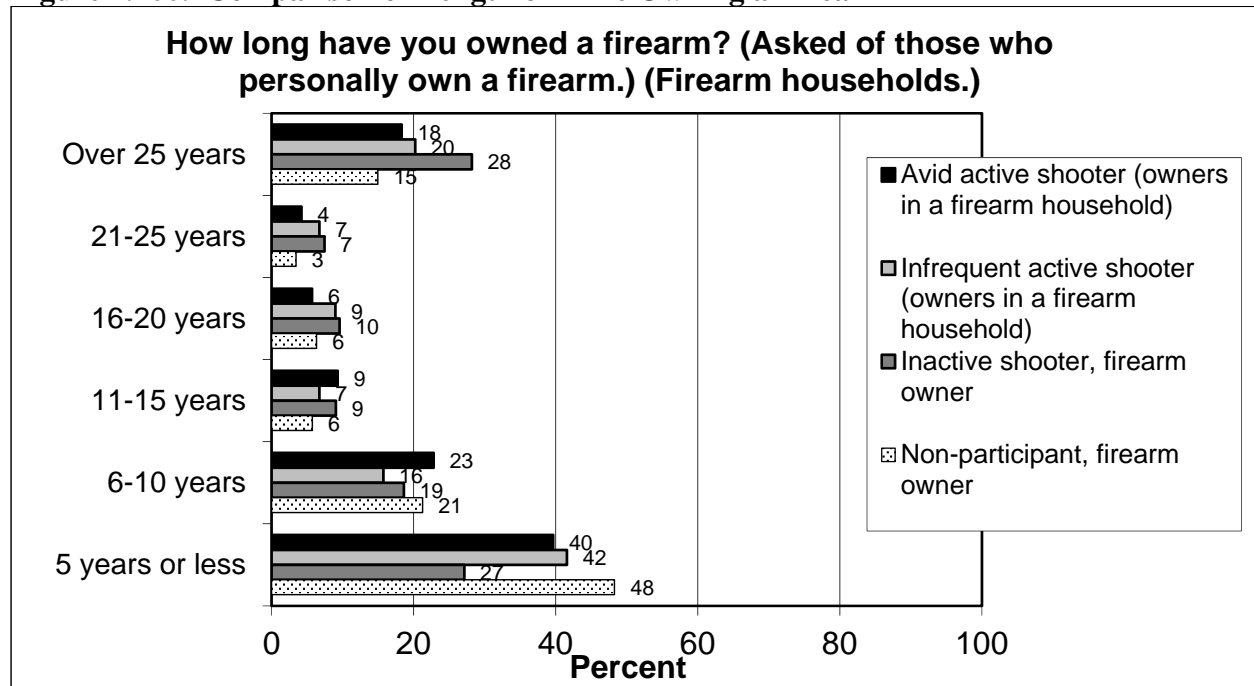
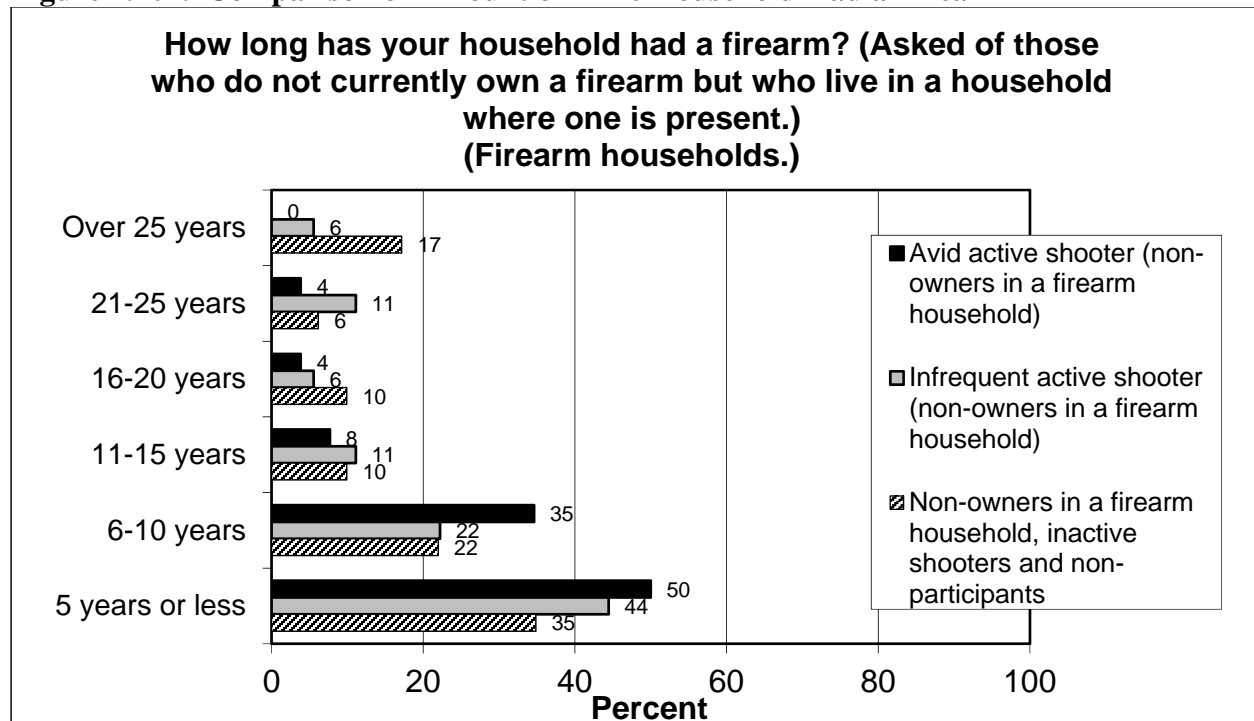
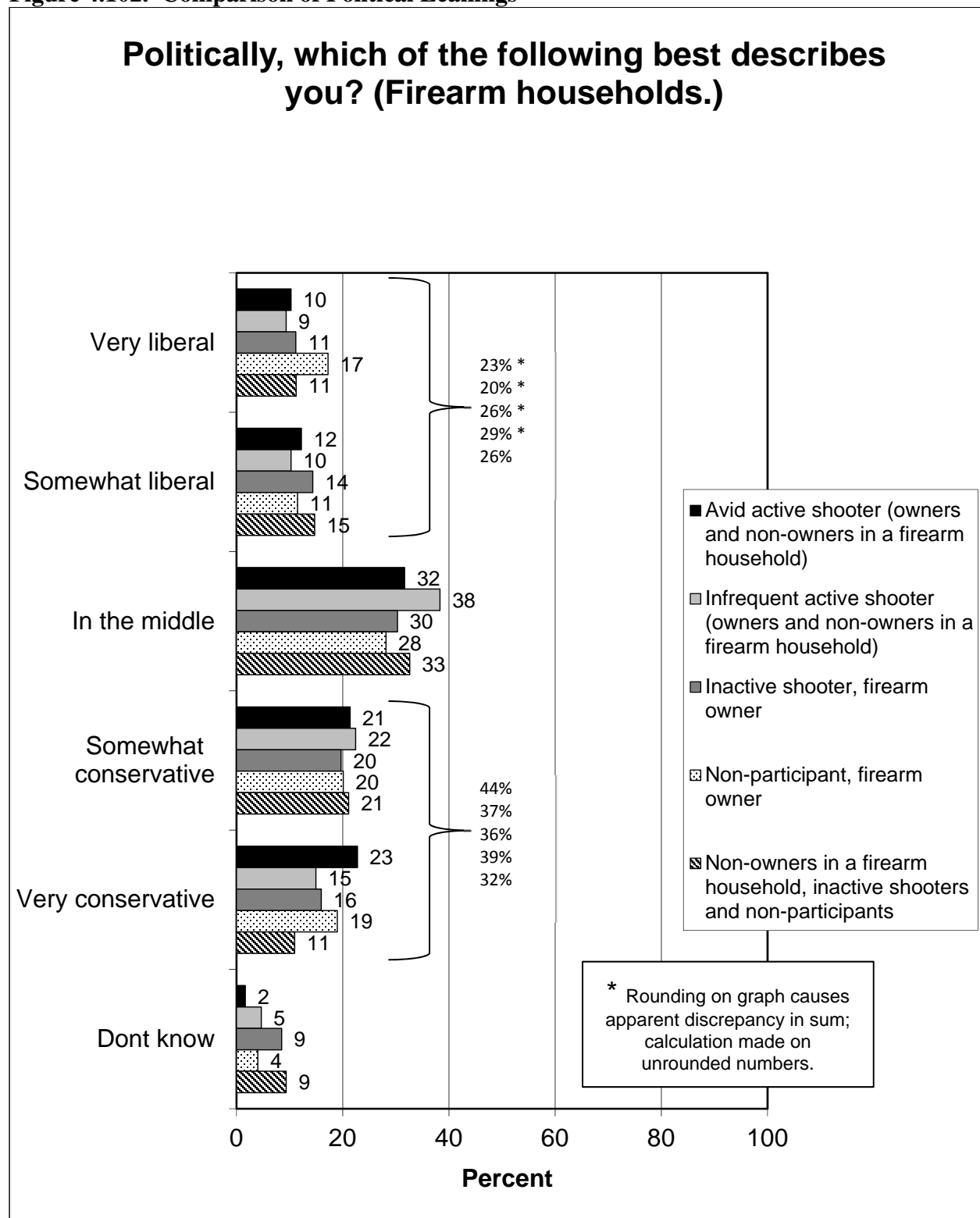


Figure 4.101. Comparison of Amount of Time Household Had a Firearm



- All groups are more conservative than liberal; avid active shooters are the most conservative (Figure 4.102).

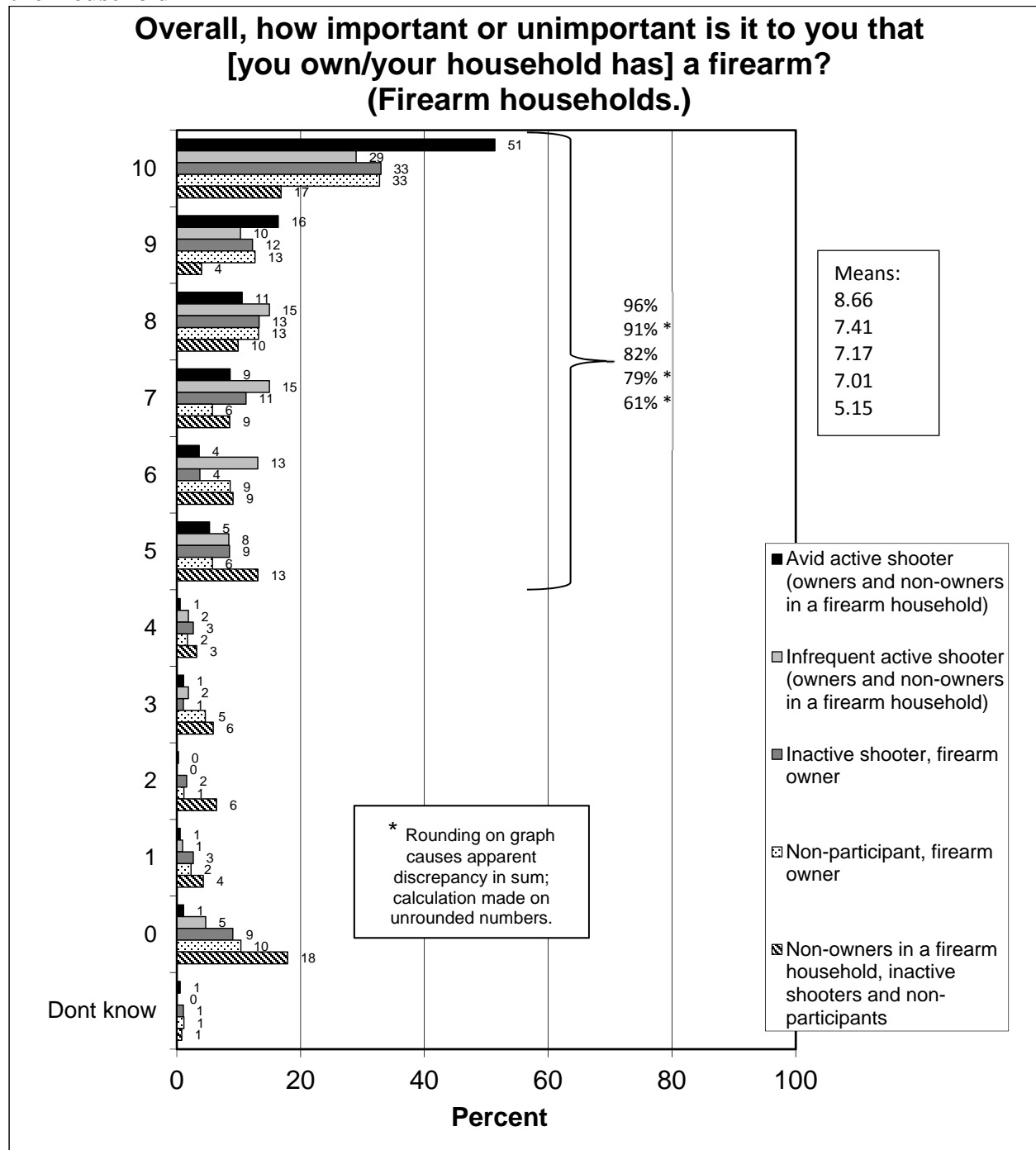
Figure 4.102. Comparison of Political Leanings



Motivations for Acquiring Firearms and How They Were Acquired (Differences Among Groups)

- Avid active shooters give the highest ratings to the importance of owning a firearm, markedly higher than the rest (Figure 4.103). Nonetheless, all groups except non-owners in a firearm household who are inactive shooters or non-participants have mean ratings well above the midpoint.

Figure 4.103. Comparison of the Importance of Owning a Firearm or Having a Firearm in the Household



- **Handguns predominate for all groups (Figure 4.104). Rifles and shotguns are more likely to be owned/in the household of inactive shooters who are firearm owners than among the other two groups of focus (non-participant, firearm owners; and infrequent active shooters).**
- Avid active shooters who have rifles are the most likely to have an AR rifle, but next are non-participants who are rifle owners (Figure 4.105).

Figure 4.104. Comparison of the Types of Firearms Owned

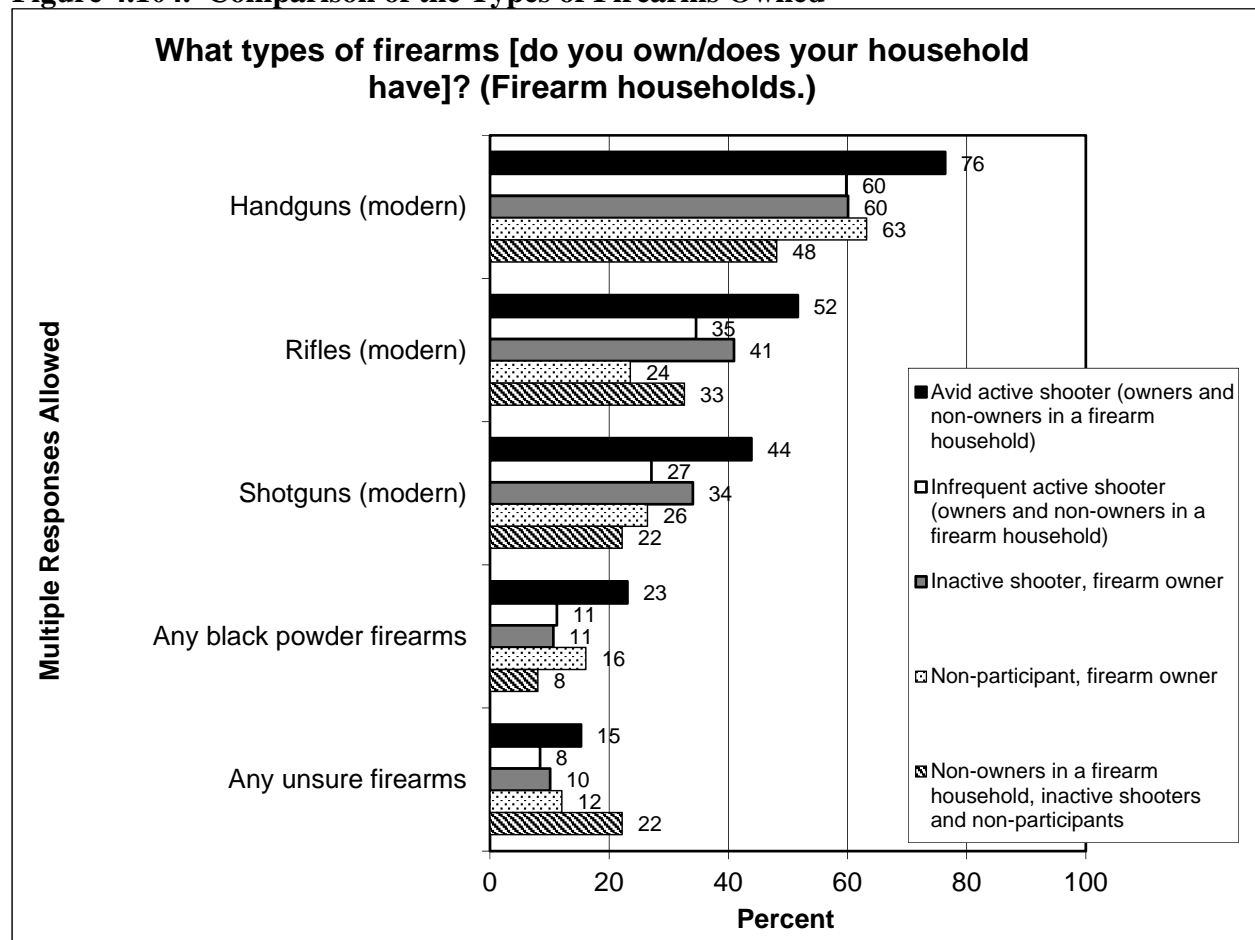
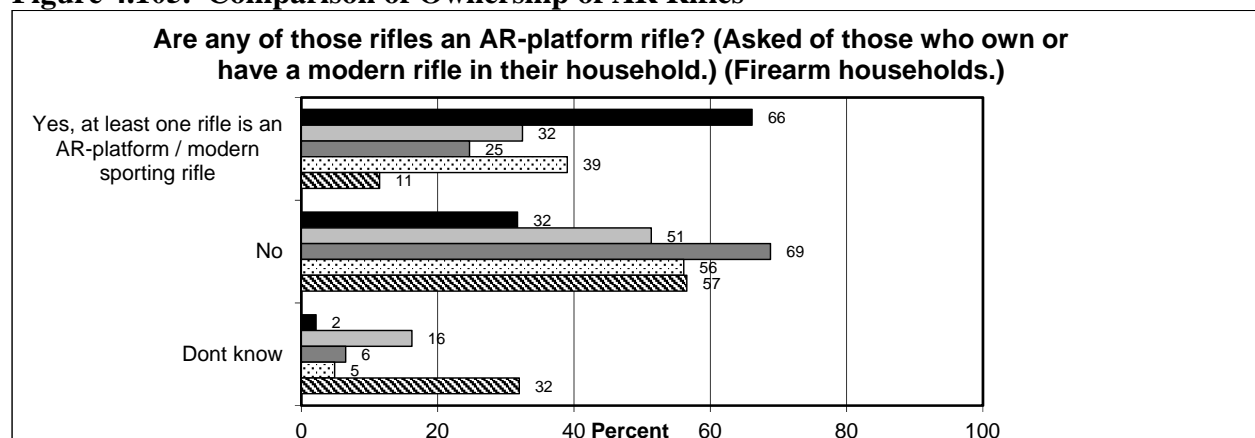


Figure 4.105. Comparison of Ownership of AR Rifles



- The three groups of focus in this study are much more likely to have acquired their firearms solely through a gift or inheritance rather than purchase (Figures 4.106 and 4.107). Avid active shooters have a markedly lower percentage who received firearms solely through these means and a much higher percentage who made purchases. The other side of the coin is that the groups of interest in this project all have a high percentage who passively received all their firearms rather than purchased them.

Figure 4.106. Comparison of How Firearms Acquired

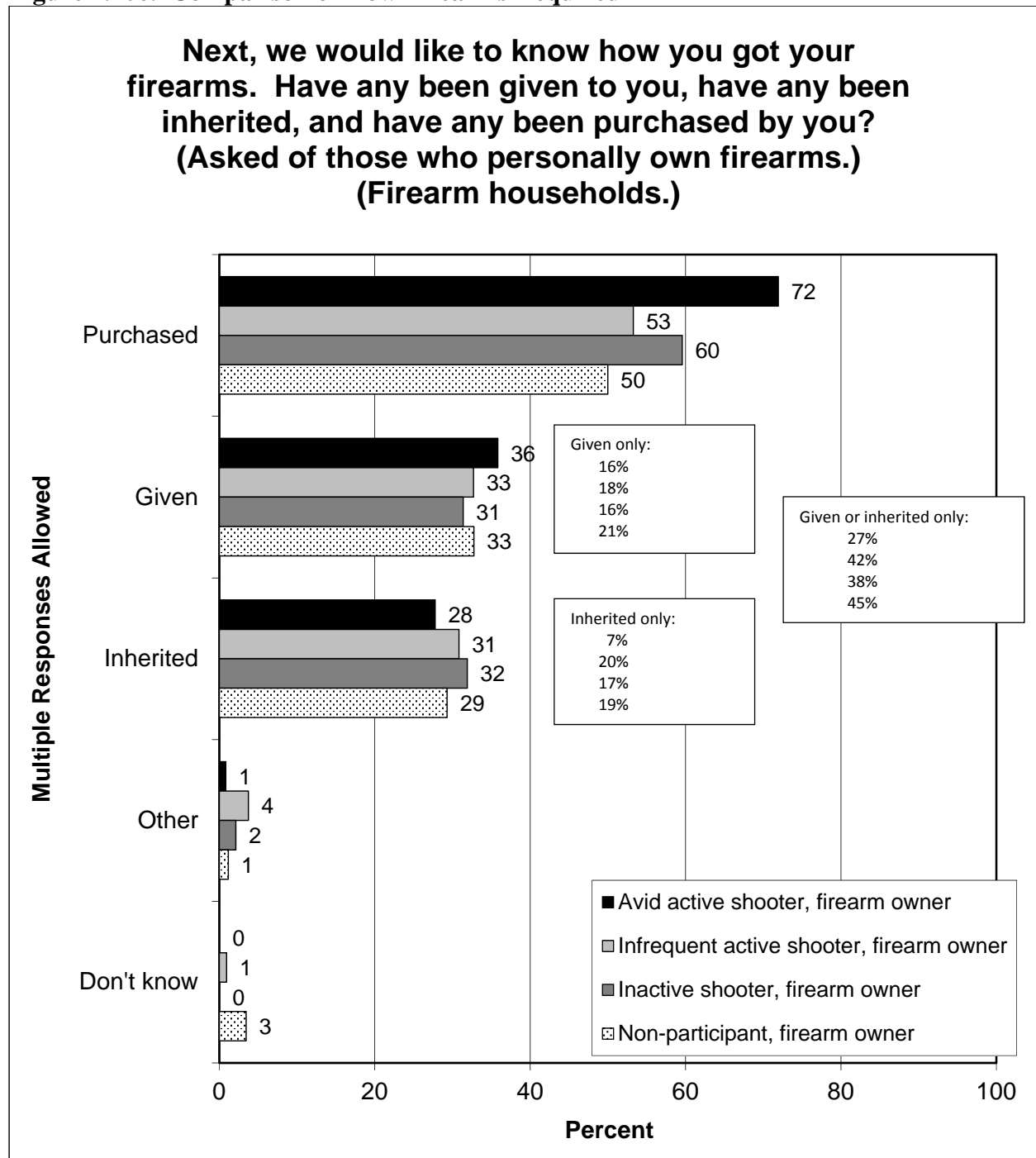
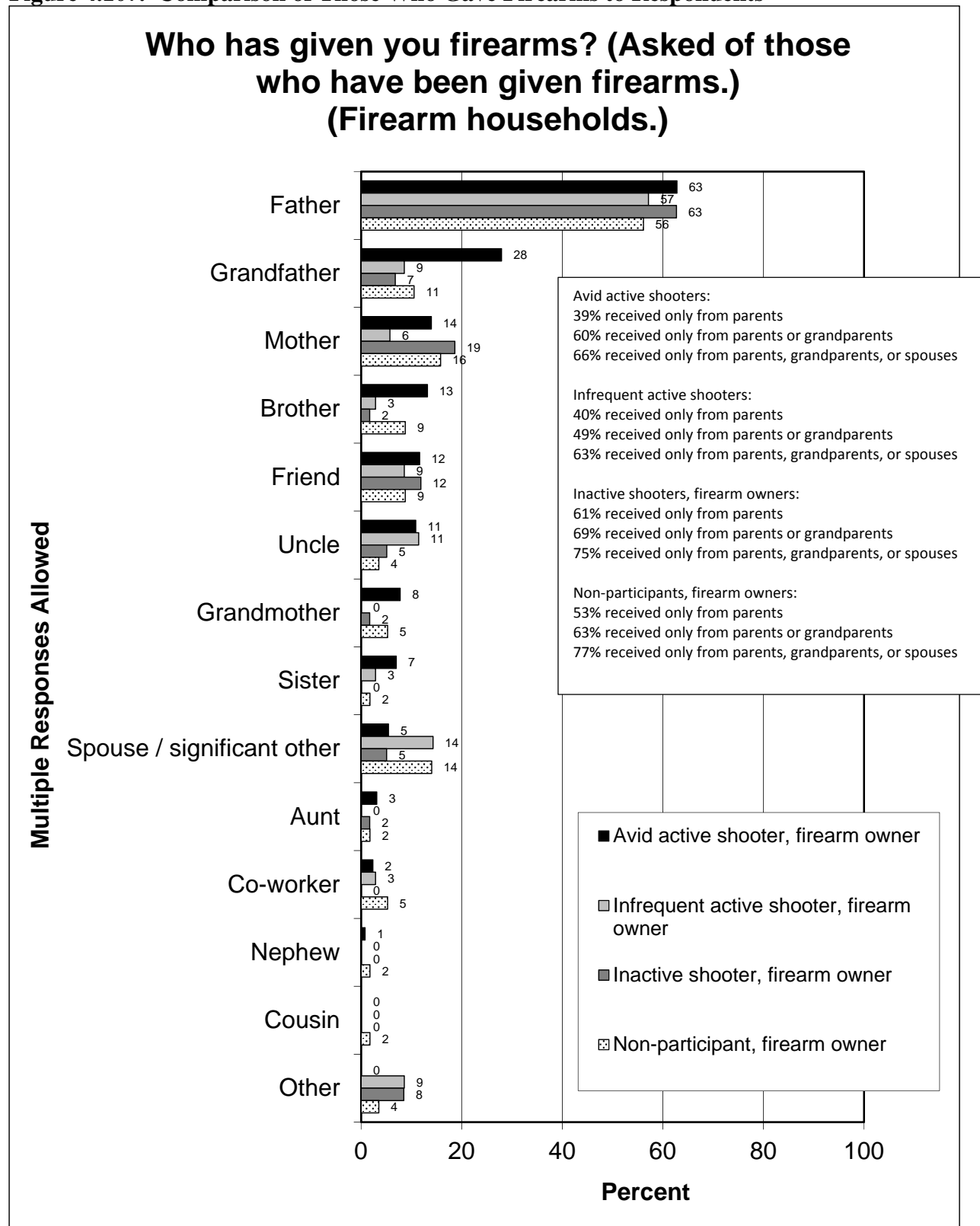


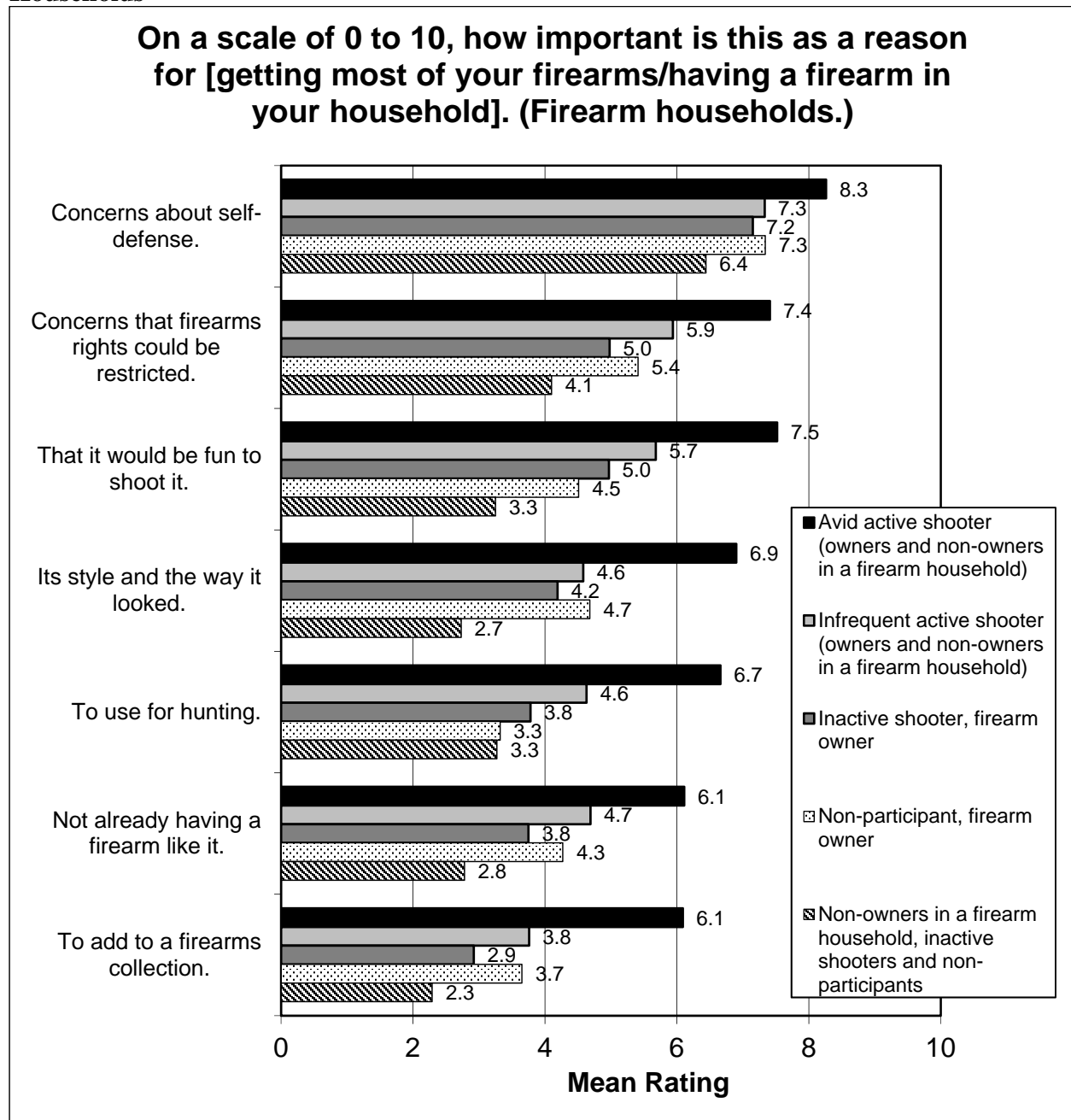
Figure 4.107. Comparison of Those Who Gave Firearms to Respondents



In this series of questions, a list of possible motivations for getting a firearm or having a firearm in the household was presented to respondents. The survey asked them to rate the importance of each motivation as a reason that they personally obtained most of their firearms or that their household has firearms. The question used a 0 to 10 scale, with 10 being the most important.

- **Avid active shooters give higher ratings to all of the potential motivations (Figure 4.108).** Among the three primary groups of interest, shooting for fun appeals more to infrequent active shooters (owners and non-owners) and inactive shooters who are firearm owners than it does to non-participants who are firearm owners.

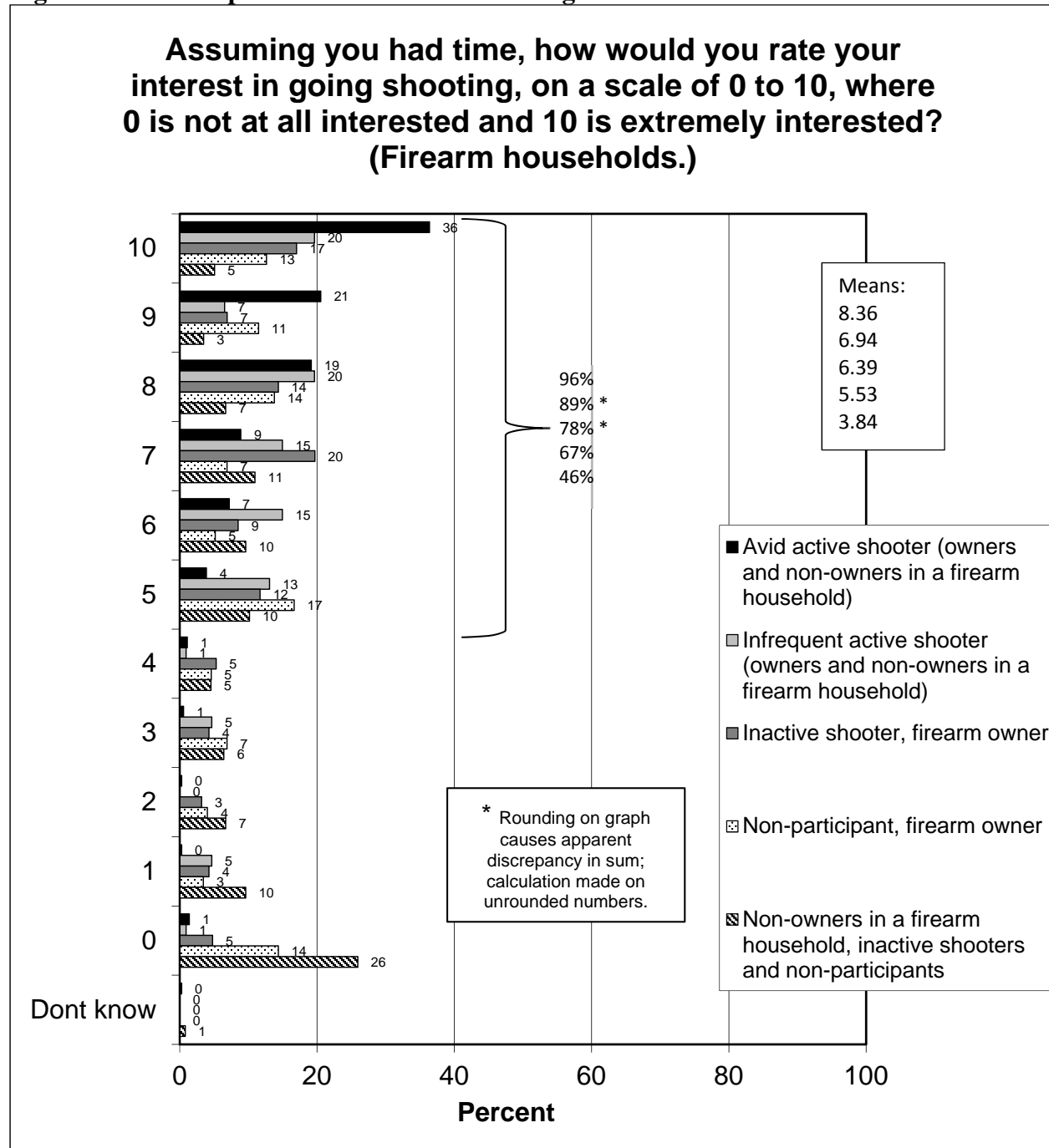
Figure 4.108. Comparison of Reasons for Getting Firearms or Having Firearms in Their Households



Interest in Sport Shooting and Opinions on Strategies To Encourage Interest (Differences Among Groups)

- Interest gets lower as one moves from avid active shooters down the bars to non-owners (Figure 4.109). The three groups of focus have markedly lower interest than avid active shooters.

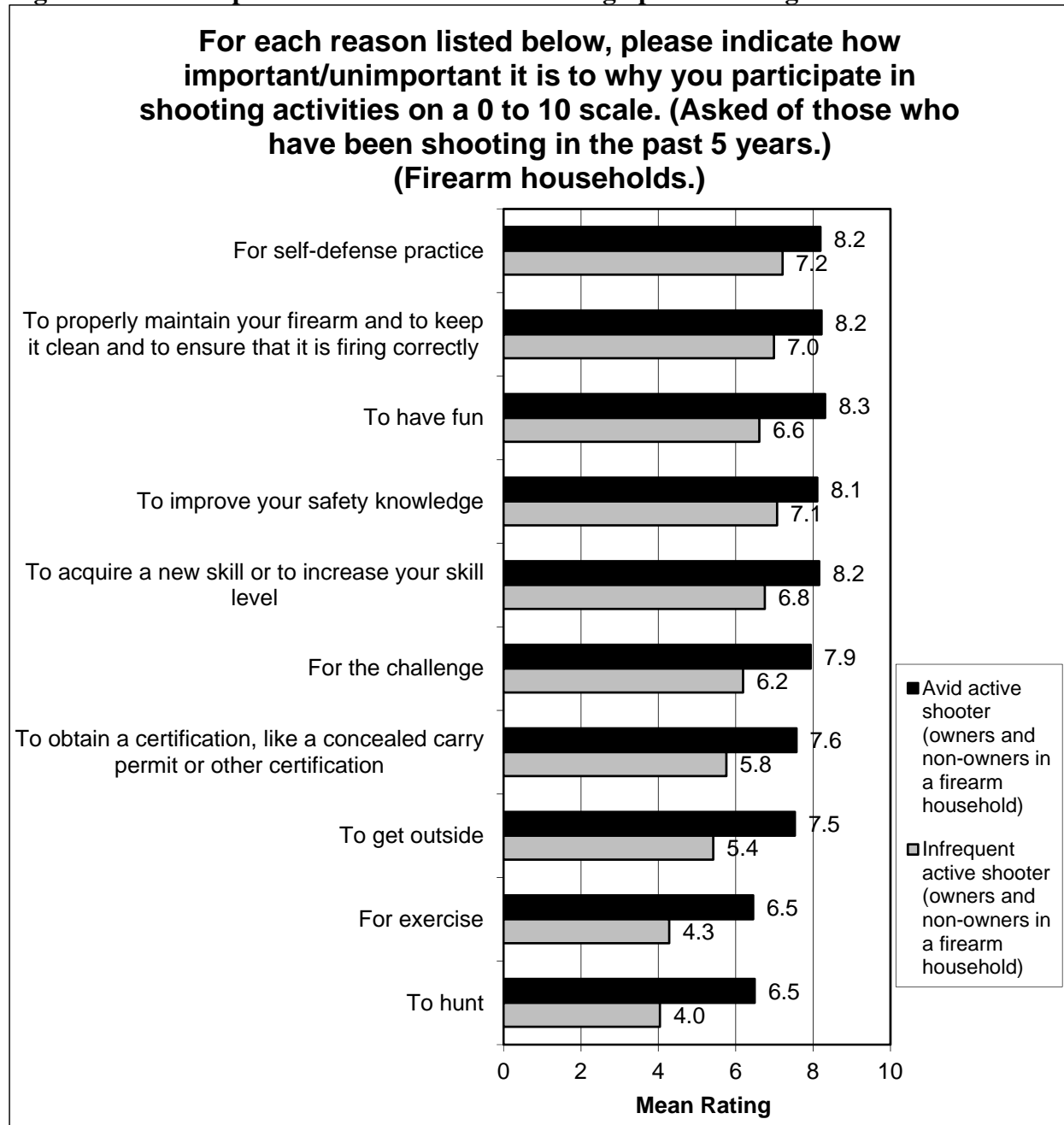
Figure 4.109. Comparison of Interest in Shooting



The survey presented a list of potential reasons that active shooters had gone sport shooting, among those who had gone sport shooting in the previous 5 years, so only two of the five groups being examined received this question. For each reason, respondents gave a rating from 0 to 10, where 0 was that it was not at all important and 10 was that it was extremely important as a reason for going sport shooting.

- **Each reason is considered more important to avid active shooters than to infrequent active shooters (Figure 4.110).**
 - The differences between the two groups are greater for the non-utilitarian reasons such as having fun, for the challenge, or for exercise.

Figure 4.110. Comparison of Motivations for Going Sport Shooting



The survey presented a list of incentives to encourage sport shooting participation. Respondents indicated whether each would make them much more interested, somewhat more interested, or a little more interested in going sport shooting, or whether it would not affect their interest level at all.

- **All the incentives are received more favorably by avid active shooters than the rest of the groups (Figure 4.111). Working from the top bar (avid active shooters) downward, the appeal is lessened, being the lowest for the bottom group (non-owners who are not active shooters).**
 - Three graphs are shown: the percentage saying that the incentives would make them much more likely (Figure 4.111); the percentage saying that the incentives would make them much, somewhat, or a little more likely (Figure 4.112); and the percentage saying that the incentives would not affect their interest at all (Figure 4.113).

Figure 4.111. Much More Interest: Comparison of Groups

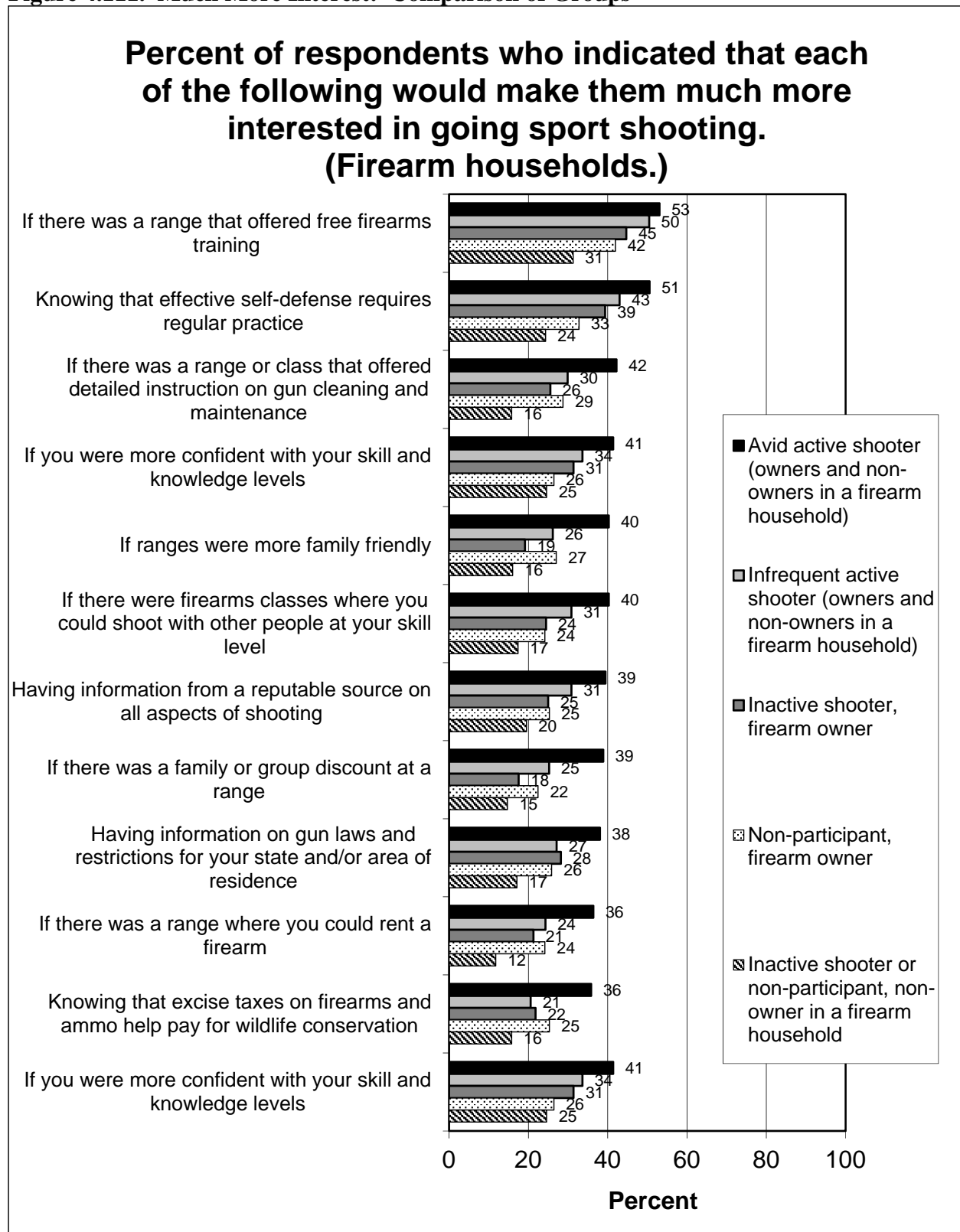


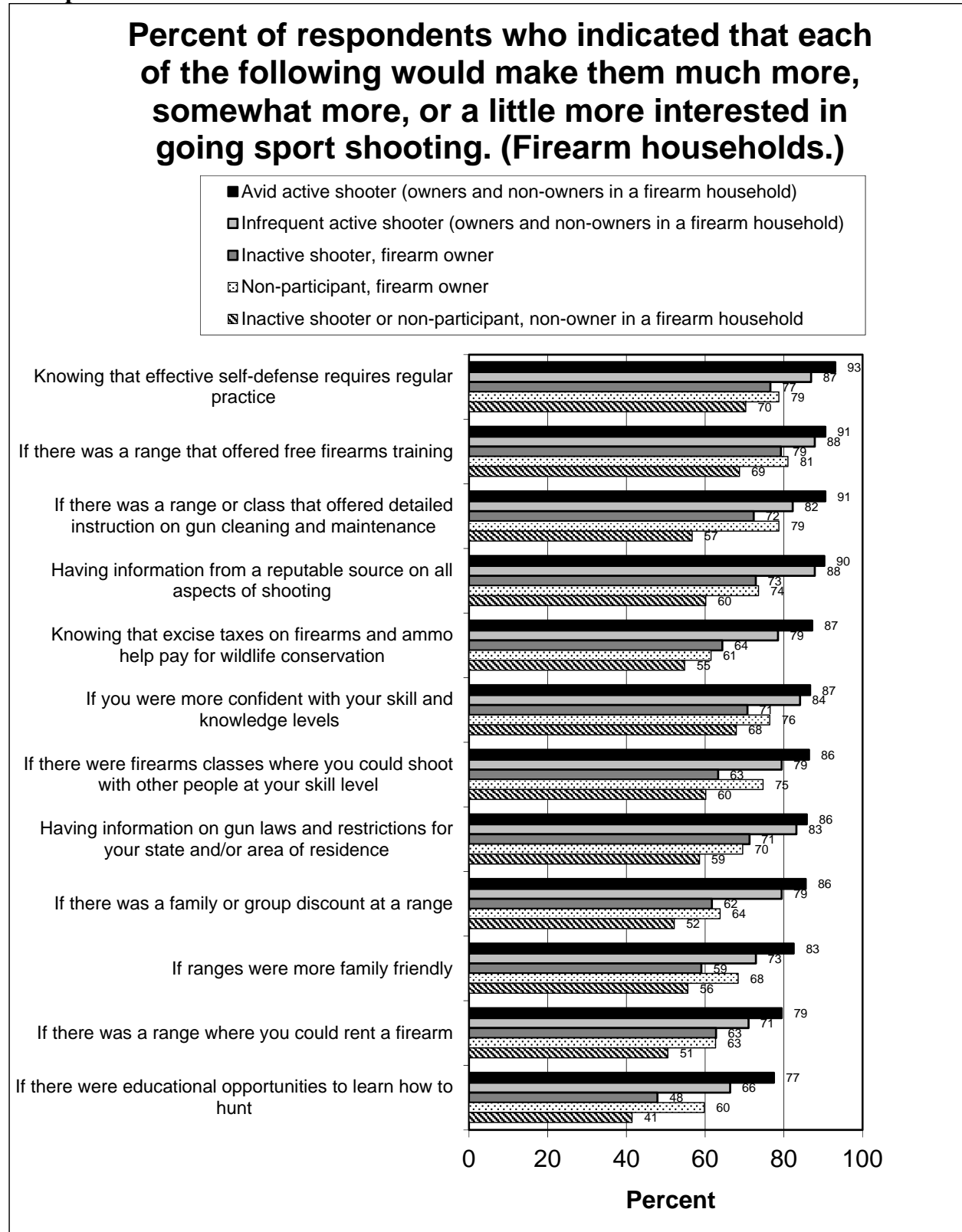
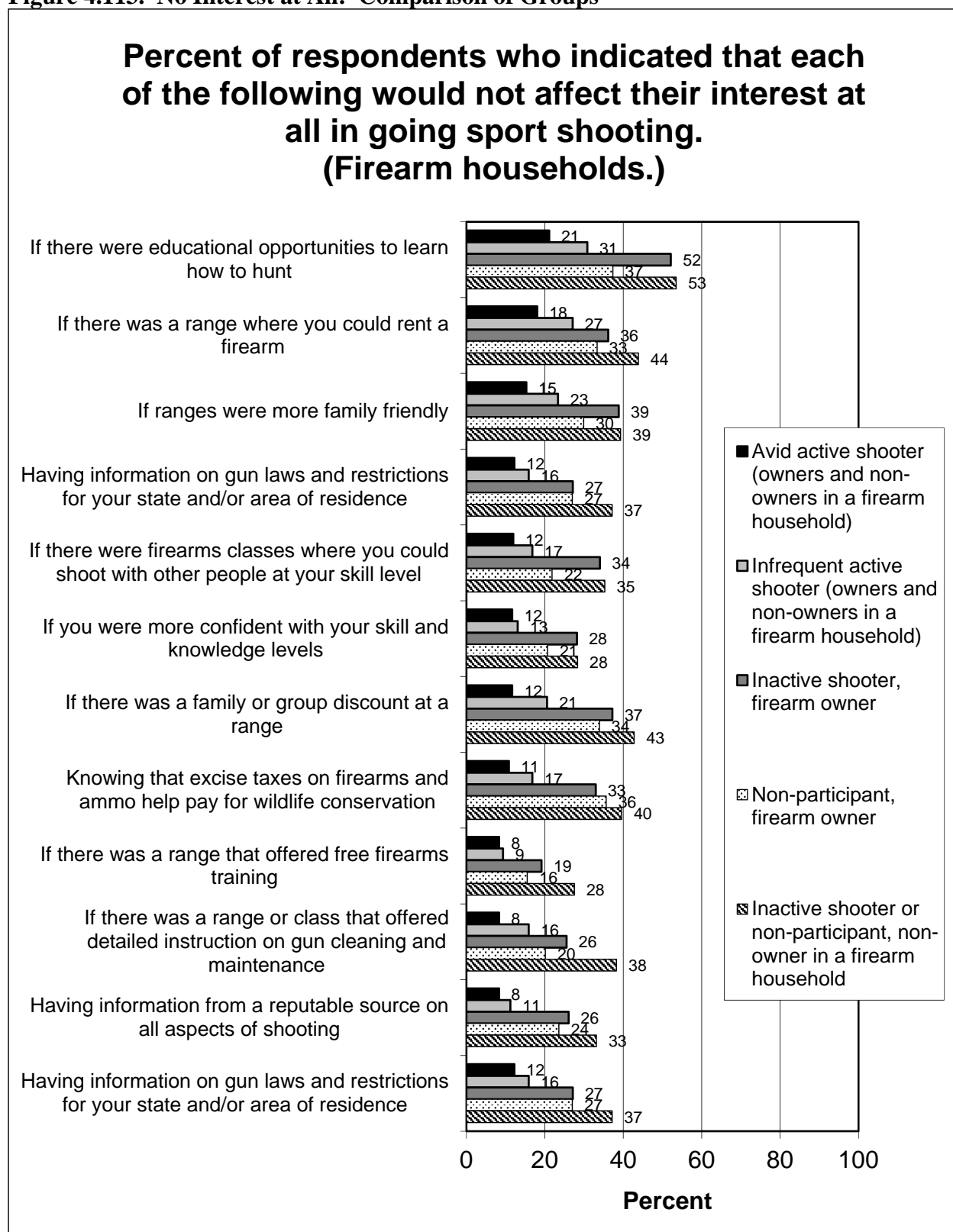
Figure 4.112. Much More, Somewhat More, or a Little More Interest: Comparison of Groups

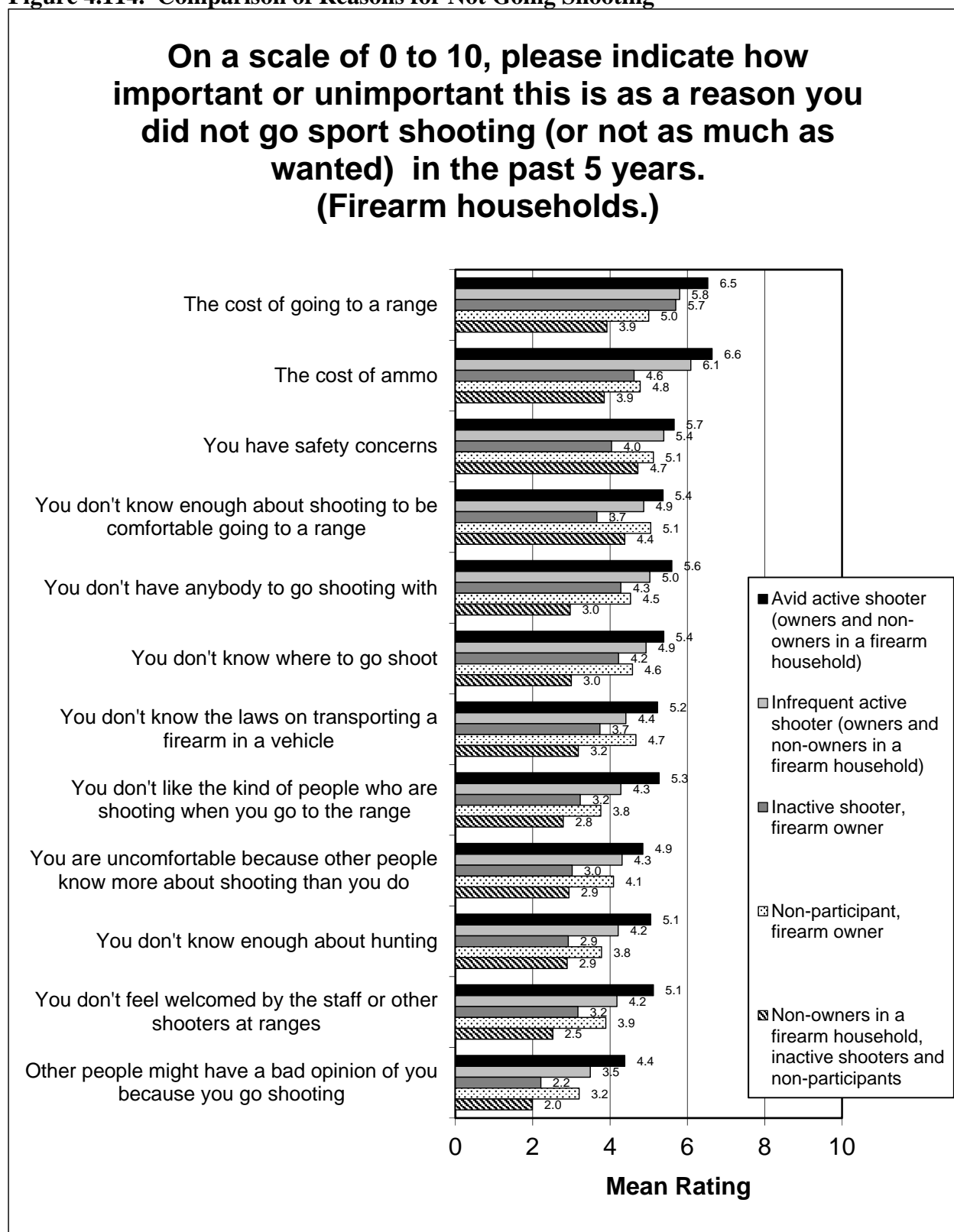
Figure 4.113. No Interest at All: Comparison of Groups



Constraints To Sport Shooting Participation (Differences Among Groups)

- **Inactive shooters do not give relatively high ratings to the constraints; the conjecture is that they may not have planned to go in the first place, so the listed constraints simply do not figure into the equation (Figure 4.114). Costs are more of an issue for active shooters (as a reason they do not shoot more than they already do) than they are for inactive shooters.**
- The result that first emerges from this analysis is that inactive shooters who own firearms (the third bar on the graphs and the group of primary interest in this project) have the lowest rating or next to lowest rating on almost every reason. They are much like non-owners who are not active shooters (the lowest bar on the graphs). One could conjecture that a simple lack of interest would mean that the other reasons simply are not important.
 - Costs are more of an issue for those who are actually participating—see in particular the differences regarding the cost of ammo.
 - Concern about safety is interesting: both groups of active shooters have the highest ratings of safety concern, but then the next highest ratings of safety concern come from the non-participants. One could conjecture that the latter's safety concerns come from lack of knowledge about firearms. However, active shooters' safety concerns could perhaps be from people having to shoot around other people whom they do not deem particularly careful or respectful of the sport. This conjecture is supported by the question that posed the statement, "You don't like the kind of people who are shooting when you go to the range." On this question, avid active shooters had the highest mean ratings.
 - Other people's opinions of the respondent do not appear to be a concern regarding sport shooting among firearm owners who are inactive shooters (again, the primary group of interest in this study). This group has the lowest ratings of importance regarding the statement, "You don't know enough about shooting to be comfortable going to a range." They have the next to lowest ratings (behind the non-owners) for the questions about not being knowledgeable enough about shooting and hunting, for the question about not being welcomed by staff and other shooters, and for the question about other people having a bad opinion of the shooting participant. In short, others' opinions are not preventing these people from sport shooting.

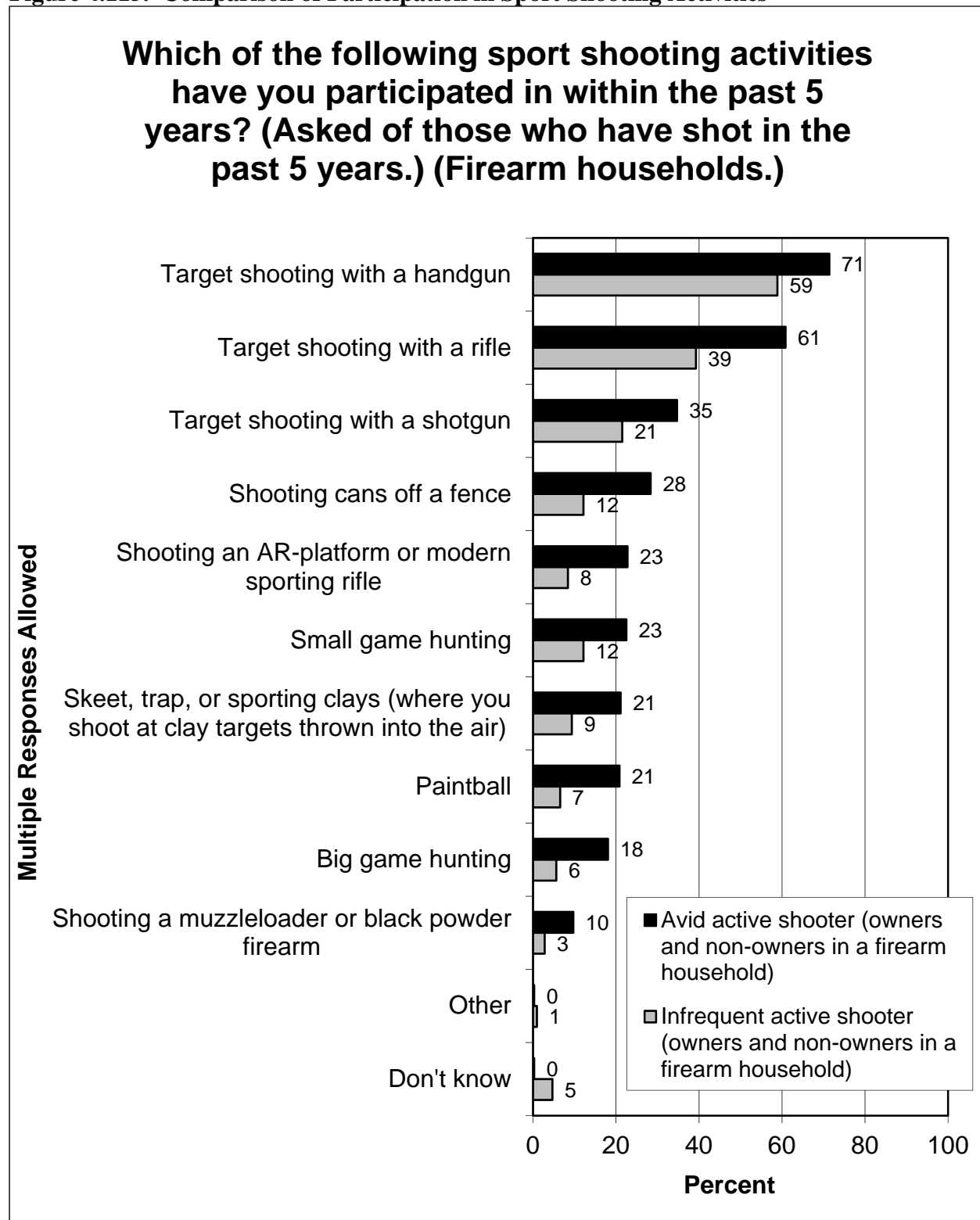
Figure 4.114. Comparison of Reasons for Not Going Shooting



Participation in Shooting Activities (Differences Among Groups)

- Target shooting with a handgun is the dominant activity among infrequent active shooters; this is not the case for avid active shooters, who also have a large percentage who target shot with a rifle (Figure 4.115).

Figure 4.115. Comparison of Participation in Sport Shooting Activities



5. METHODOLOGY

This project entailed focus groups and scientific surveys of the general population of Americans and of firearm owners and those with firearms in their households. The surveys had questions specifically aimed at non-shooting firearm owners and non-shooters in households with firearms, active but not particularly avid shooters, and avid shooters. Specific aspects of the methodology are detailed below.

FOCUS GROUPS

For this project, the focus groups obtained qualitative data (as opposed to the quantitative data obtained in the surveys, as explained further on), and they assisted in the refinement of the survey instruments. The focus groups explored in an open-ended manner the attitudes of inactive shooters toward firearm ownership, shooting participation, barriers to the latter, and other relevant topics. The focus groups' value lied in the nuances of the issues that emerged, which provided the insight to ensure that the surveys covered all the topics necessary for completely analyzing the lack of participation among inactive shooters who own firearms or have a firearm in their household.

Focus Group Overview

In general, focus groups entail an in-depth, structured discussion with a small group of participants (generally 10 to 12 individuals) about select subjects. The use of focus groups is an accepted research technique for qualitative explorations of attitudes, opinions, perceptions, motivations, constraints, participation, and behaviors. Focus groups provide researchers with insights, new hypotheses, and understanding through the process of interaction.

Responsive Management conducted these focus groups using textbook-quality research methodology for qualitative research. An experienced, trained moderator led the focus groups, as unobtrusively as possible, through a discussion guide and looked for new insights into why these inactive shooters felt the way they did about sport shooting.

Responsive Management administered or supervised all aspects of the focus groups, including procuring facilities, recruiting participants, room set-up, and all other logistical support required to successfully conduct the focus groups. The focus groups were recorded for further analysis, and Responsive Management transcribed important parts of the focus group discussions and analyzed the qualitative data thereby obtained.

Focus Group Discussion Guide

Responsive Management, in collaboration with the NSSF, developed the discussion guide. The use of a discussion guide allowed for consistency in the data collection from all the focus group participants and kept the discussion on topic. The discussion guide included questions addressing top-of-mind issues as well as questions designed to allow for probing into more specific topics and concerns.

Focus Group Locations and Facilities

The group locations were geographically diverse (Colorado and Florida). Responsive Management arranged and confirmed all facility reservations and coordinated focus group room setup and food arrangements. Refreshments and snacks were provided to the focus group participants.

Sample Group Acquisition

Most qualitative techniques, such as the focus groups in this study, call for small sample sizes. The conclusions rest on face validity and rely on the depth of analysis rather than breadth of analysis. Focus group research, like all qualitative research, sacrifices reliability, or the ability to replicate results, for the sake of increased validity.

Responsive Management recruited participants for the focus groups from a sample of likely non-shooting firearm owners. The focus group sample, although small (as is necessary), was diverse, including people of a range of ages, and including both women and men and people of diverse ethnicities. A screener questionnaire was used in recruiting to ensure that people either owned a firearm or were in a household with a firearm but had not shot in the previous 3 years.

Recruited participants were informed of the focus group date, time, and location, and they were mailed or emailed (depending on their preference) a confirmation. Participants were provided with all information needed to attend the focus group, such as directions to the facility and the start time, and they were provided a telephone number, manned by a live receptionist, for any questions that they may have had prior to the focus group.

Responsive Management's focus group recruiting manager maintained a progress table for each focus group to track the number of participants recruited and to log participant name, contact information, and essential participant characteristics. Responsive Management recruited 12 to 14 individuals for each group in order for at least 10 to 12 to ultimately attend. The recruiting manager also ensured that all confirmation letters or emails were sent out promptly to participants and that reminder telephone calls were made the day before the scheduled groups. Reminder calls and interaction with respondents prior to the groups helped ensure attendance, resulting in quality focus group samples.

Focus Group Moderation

The focus groups were moderated using the discussion guide. An experienced, trained moderator conducted each 1½- to 2-hour group, keeping the discussion within design parameters without exerting a strong influence on the discussion content. In this sense, the focus groups were non-directive group discussions that exposed the spontaneous attitudes of the focus group participants. The moderator ensured that, for each focus group, the room was set up appropriately, including furniture, recording equipment, and food arrangements. The focus group discussions were recorded for further analysis.

MULTI-MODAL SURVEY

For the survey portion of the study, a multi-modal approach was selected. One part of the survey effort consisted of a telephone survey of the general population of Americans. Another part of the overall survey effort entailed an online survey of those who own a firearm or have a firearm in their household, whether they are inactive shooters, non-avid shooters, or avid shooters.

For the general population portion of the overall survey effort, telephone calling was selected as the preferred sampling medium because of the almost universal ownership of telephones among the general population of Americans (both landlines and cell phones were called in their proper proportions).

For the portion of the survey effort aimed at the three sets of shooters (inactive, non-avid, and avid) who either owned a firearm or had one in their household, an online questionnaire was used. Online surveying is scientifically valid for closed groups, such as the shooter groups that were the focus of this portion of the survey effort. The survey could not be found and taken by somebody simply surfing the Internet; rather, the survey could be taken only by those who were specifically invited to participate and who had the access code to take the survey.

Design of Questionnaires

The survey questionnaires were developed by Responsive Management in cooperation with the survey partners, based on the research team's familiarity with shooting sports and outdoor recreation in general. Responsive Management conducted pre-tests of the questionnaires to ensure proper wording, flow, and logic in the surveys.

Survey Sample

The general population portion of the survey effort used a dual-frame sample (meaning that it contained both landlines and cell phones in their proper proportions). Use of a dual-frame sample provides almost complete coverage of United States residents because nearly every American household has either a cell phone or landline telephone. The dual-frame sample used a probability-based selection process that ensured that each eligible United States resident had an essentially equal chance of being selected for the survey. This process ensured that the sample was valid because every resident had a known chance of participating in the survey.

The portion of the survey effort for the shooter groups used a sample that consisted of those who were likely to own a firearm or have one in their household. Screener questions in this portion of the survey effort ensured that respondents met the criteria to be surveyed (either owned a firearm or lived in a household that had a firearm) and that they received the questions for their particular shooting status (inactive, non-avid, and avid).

Telephone Interviewing and Online Data Collection Facilities

A central polling and data management site at the Responsive Management office allowed for rigorous quality control over the interviews and online data collection. Responsive Management maintains its own in-house telephone interviewing and online data management facilities. These facilities are staffed by interviewers and data analysts with experience conducting computer-assisted telephone interviews and online data collection on the subjects of outdoor recreation, including the shooting sports.

To ensure the integrity of the telephone survey data, Responsive Management has interviewers who have been trained according to the standards established by the Council of American Survey Research Organizations. Methods of instruction included lecture and role-playing. The Survey Center Managers and other professional staff conducted a project briefing with the interviewers

prior to the administration of this survey. Interviewers were instructed on type of study, study goals and objectives, handling of survey questions, interview length, termination points and qualifiers for participation, interviewer instructions within the survey questionnaire, reading of the survey questions, skip patterns, and probing and clarifying techniques necessary for specific questions on the survey questionnaire.

Surveying Times

Telephone surveying times are Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Saturday from noon to 5:00 p.m., and Sunday from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., local time. A five-callback design was used to maintain the representativeness of the sample, to avoid bias toward people easy to reach by telephone, and to provide an equal opportunity for all to participate. When a respondent could not be reached on the first call, subsequent calls were placed on different days of the week and at different times of the day.

Online surveys can be taken at the convenience of the respondent. The online portion of the survey included an email invitation as well as follow-up email and telephone reminders to encourage potential respondents to participate in the survey.

Survey Data Collection and Quality Control

The software used for telephone data collection was Questionnaire Programming Language (QPL). The survey data were entered into the computer as each telephone interview was being conducted, eliminating manual data entry after the completion of the survey and the concomitant data entry errors that may occur with manual data entry. The survey questionnaire was programmed so that QPL branched, coded, and substituted phrases in the survey based on previous responses to ensure the integrity and consistency of the data collection.

The online surveying was conducted using the surveying software of the online survey company that was used for the survey effort. The survey, however, was coded by Responsive Management to ensure that the survey asked the appropriate questions of the three shooting groups. The data were exported from the online surveying effort into IBM SPSS Statistics.

The Survey Center Managers and statisticians monitored the telephone and online data collection, including monitoring of the actual telephone interviews without the interviewers' knowledge to evaluate the performance of each interviewer and ensure the integrity of the data. The survey questionnaires themselves contained error checkers and computation statements to ensure quality and consistent data. After the surveys were obtained by the interviewers, the Survey Center Managers and/or statisticians checked each completed survey to ensure clarity and completeness. Responsive Management obtained a total of 3,719 completed interviews in the overall surveying effort.

DATA ANALYSES

Responsive Management fully interpreted the qualitative information obtained by the focus groups. In total, the qualitative analyses were performed in three iterations: 1) the actual focus group observation and the moderators' notes from the focus groups, 2) review of recordings by researchers other than the moderators, and 3) the development of findings by the moderators and other analysts in collaboration. The focus group findings assisted in the understanding of firearm owners' challenges and concerns, as well as other aspects that could not fully be measured in the quantitative survey.

The quantitative analysis of the data obtained from the telephone and online surveys was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics as well as proprietary software developed by Responsive Management.

The report contains separate sections for the qualitative analysis (i.e., the analysis of the focus groups) and the quantitative analysis (i.e., the analysis of the telephone and online surveys). Note, however, that the findings of the focus groups were also used in the refinement of the survey instrument prior to the quantitative data collection.

PRESENTATION OF DATA

The survey questionnaire included several types of questions:

- Open-ended questions are those in which no answer set is read to the respondents; rather, they are able to respond with anything that comes to mind from the question.
- Closed-ended questions have an answer set from which to choose.
- Single or multiple response questions: Some questions allow only a single response, while other questions allow respondents to give more than one response or choose all that applies. Those that allow more than a single response are indicated on the graphs with the label, “Multiple Responses Allowed.”
- Scaled questions: Many closed-ended questions (but not all) are in a scale, such as a 0 to 10 scale.
- Series questions: Many questions are part of a series, and the results are primarily intended to be examined relative to the other questions in that series (although results of the questions individually can also be valuable). Typically, results of all questions in a series are shown together.

Most graphs show results rounded to the nearest integer; however, all data are stored in decimal format, and all calculations are performed on unrounded numbers. For this reason, some graphs may not sum to exactly 100% because of this rounding on the graphs. Additionally, rounding may cause apparent discrepancies of 1 percentage point between the graphs and the reported results of combined responses (e.g., when “much more” and “somewhat more” are summed to determine the total percentage saying “more”).

ABOUT RESPONSIVE MANAGEMENT

Responsive Management is an internationally recognized public opinion and attitude survey research firm specializing in natural resource and outdoor recreation issues. Our mission is to help natural resource and outdoor recreation agencies and organizations better understand and work with their constituents, customers, and the public.

Utilizing our in-house, full-service telephone, mail, and web-based survey facilities with 50 professional interviewers, we have conducted more than 1,000 telephone surveys, mail surveys, personal interviews, and focus groups, as well as numerous marketing and communication plans, needs assessments, and program evaluations.

Clients include the federal natural resource and land management agencies, most state fish and wildlife agencies, state departments of natural resources, environmental protection agencies, state park agencies, tourism boards, most of the major conservation and sportsmen's organizations, and numerous private businesses. Responsive Management also collects attitude and opinion data for many of the nation's top universities.

Specializing in research on public attitudes toward natural resource and outdoor recreation issues, Responsive Management has completed a wide range of projects during the past 26 years, including dozens of studies of hunters, anglers, wildlife viewers, boaters, park visitors, historic site visitors, hikers, birdwatchers, campers, and rock climbers. Responsive Management has conducted studies on endangered species; waterfowl and wetlands; and the reintroduction of large predators such as wolves, grizzly bears, and the Florida panther.

Responsive Management has assisted with research on numerous natural resource ballot initiatives and referenda and has helped agencies and organizations find alternative funding and increase their membership and donations. Additionally, Responsive Management has conducted major organizational and programmatic needs assessments to assist natural resource agencies and organizations in developing more effective programs based on a solid foundation of fact.

Responsive Management has conducted research on public attitudes toward natural resources and outdoor recreation in almost every state in the United States, as well as in Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Japan. Responsive Management has also conducted focus groups and personal interviews with residents of the African countries of Algeria, Cameroon, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Responsive Management routinely conducts surveys in Spanish and has conducted surveys in Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Vietnamese and has completed numerous studies with specific target audiences, including Hispanics; African-Americans; Asians; women; children; senior citizens; urban, suburban, and rural residents; large landowners; and farmers.

Responsive Management's research has been upheld in U.S. District Courts; used in peer-reviewed journals; and presented at major natural resource, fish and wildlife, and outdoor recreation conferences across the world. Company research has been featured in most of the nation's major media, including CNN, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and on the front pages of *USA Today* and *The Washington Post*. Responsive Management's research has also been highlighted in *Newsweek* magazine.

Visit the Responsive Management website at:
www.responsivemanagement.com

