

Ferguson and Police Use of Deadly Force

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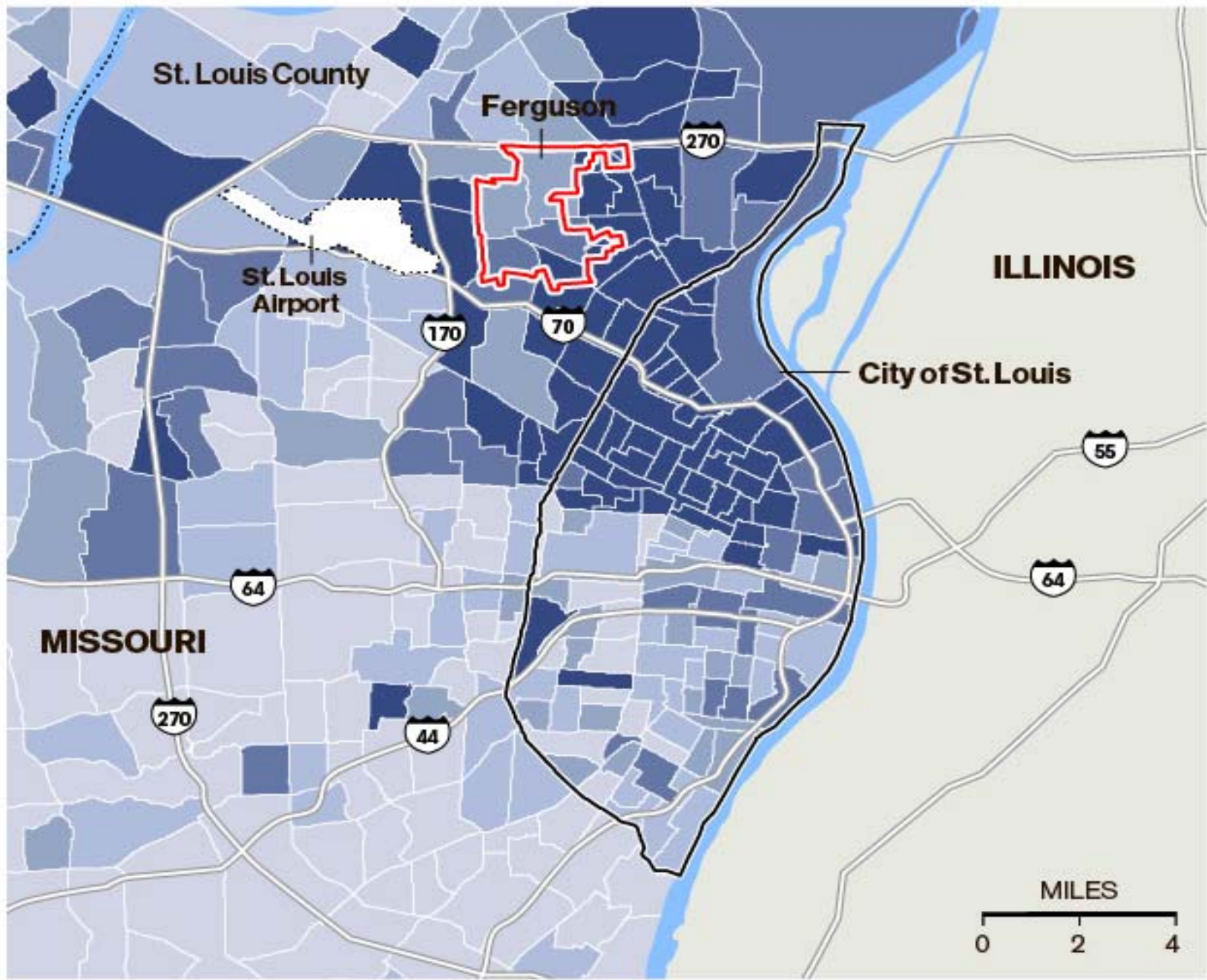
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Themes

- Why Ferguson? Ferguson in context
- Is there a “Ferguson effect” on crime?
- Research on police use of force
 - St. Louis study
- “Expanding the narrative”
 - Focus on violent *situations*
- Building new data systems

Why Ferguson?

Ferguson in Context



Source: Business Week

Demographic Context

	<i>Ferguson</i>	<i>St. Louis Co.</i>	<i>St. Louis City</i>
Population	21,203	998,954	319,356
% Black	67.4	23.7	49.2
% Unem	12.2	8.6	14.3
% Poor	24.9	10.9	27.4

Source: American Community Survey (2009-2013)

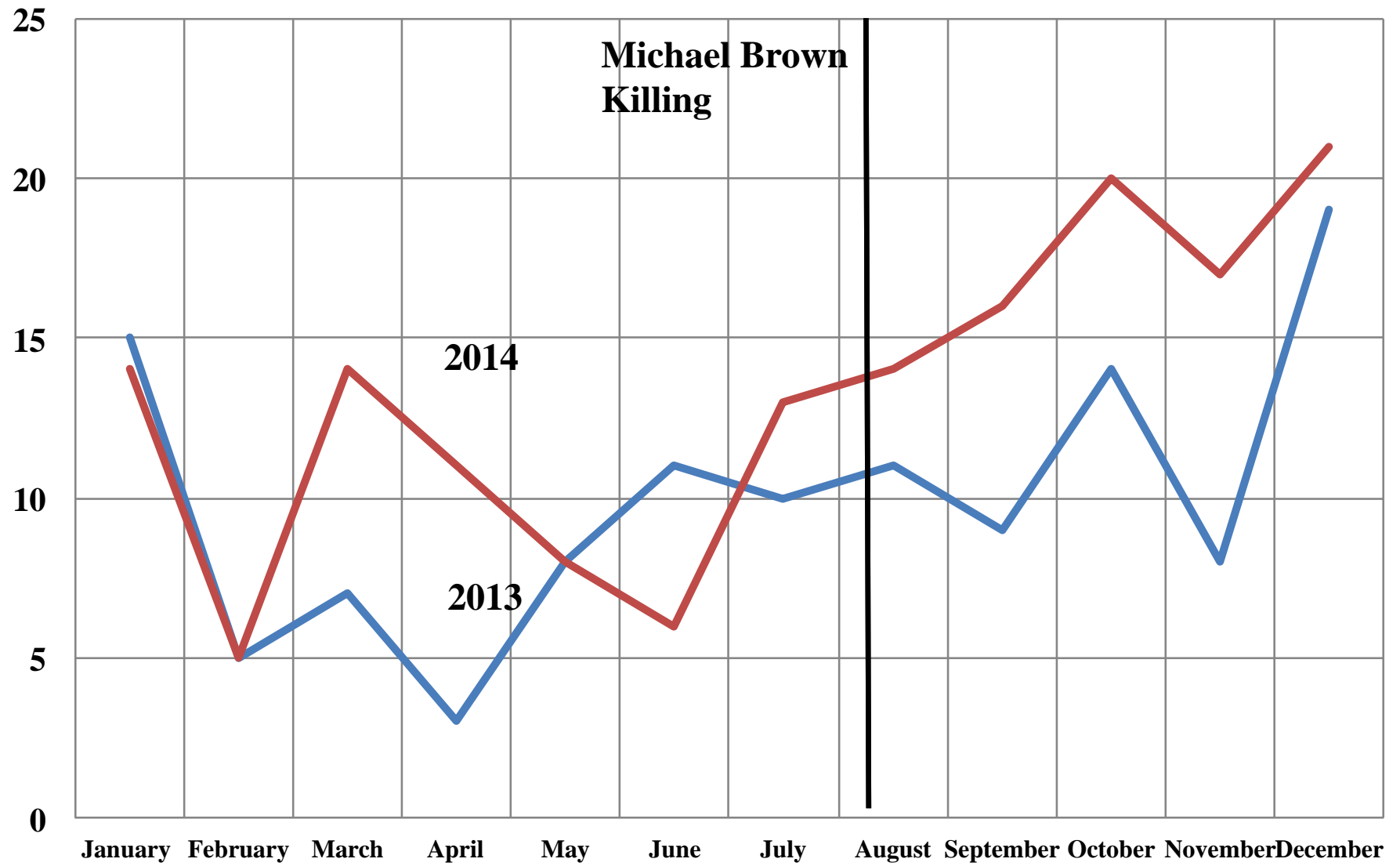
Crime Rates per 1,000 Population, 2013

	<i>Ferguson</i>	<i>St. Louis Co.</i>	<i>St. Louis City</i>
Homicide	.094	.037	.376
Violent	4.76	2.82	15.9
Property	53.1	24.8	66.8

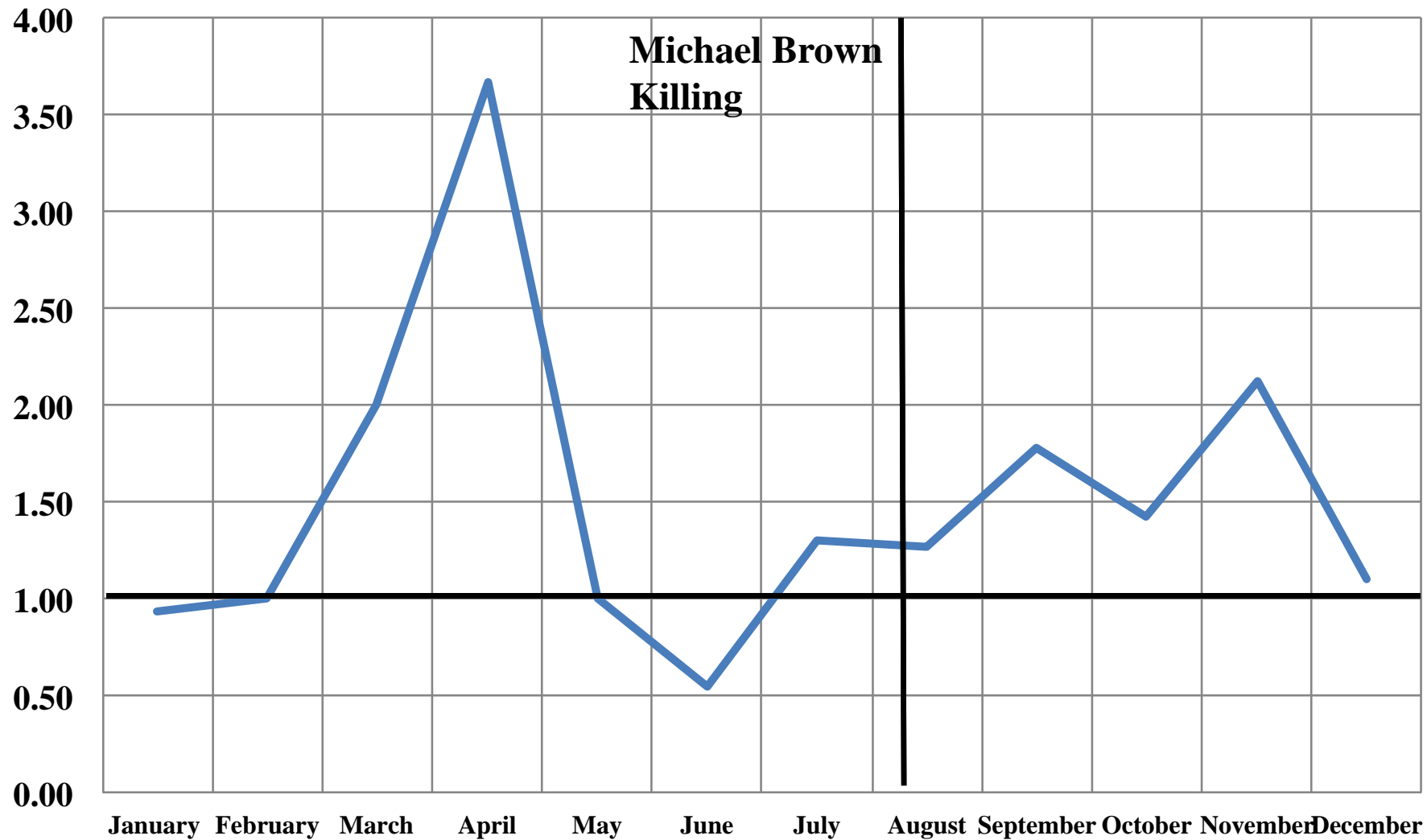
Source: MO Uniform Crime Reporting Program

“Ferguson Effect” on Crime?

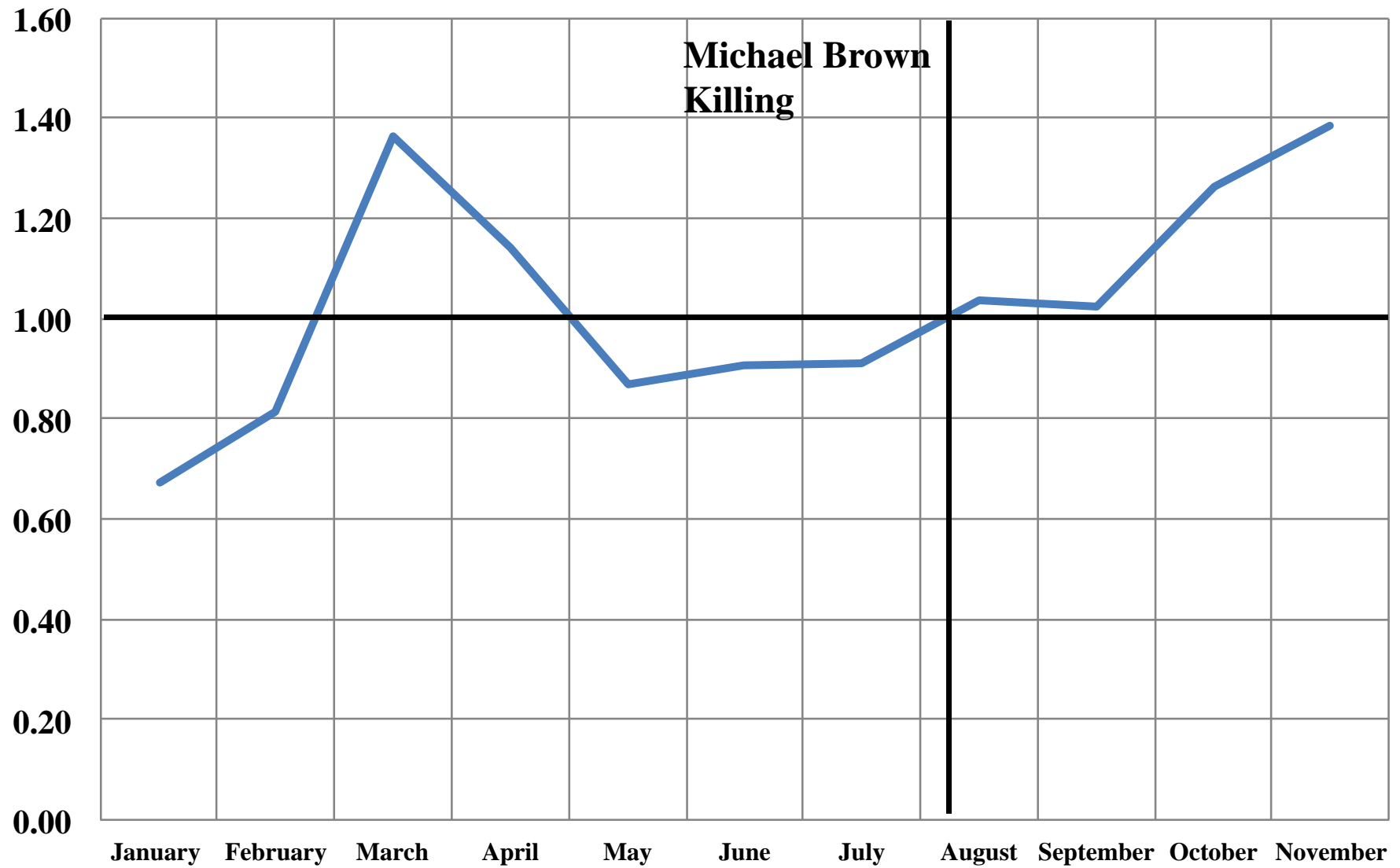
Monthly Homicides in St. Louis, 2013 - 2014



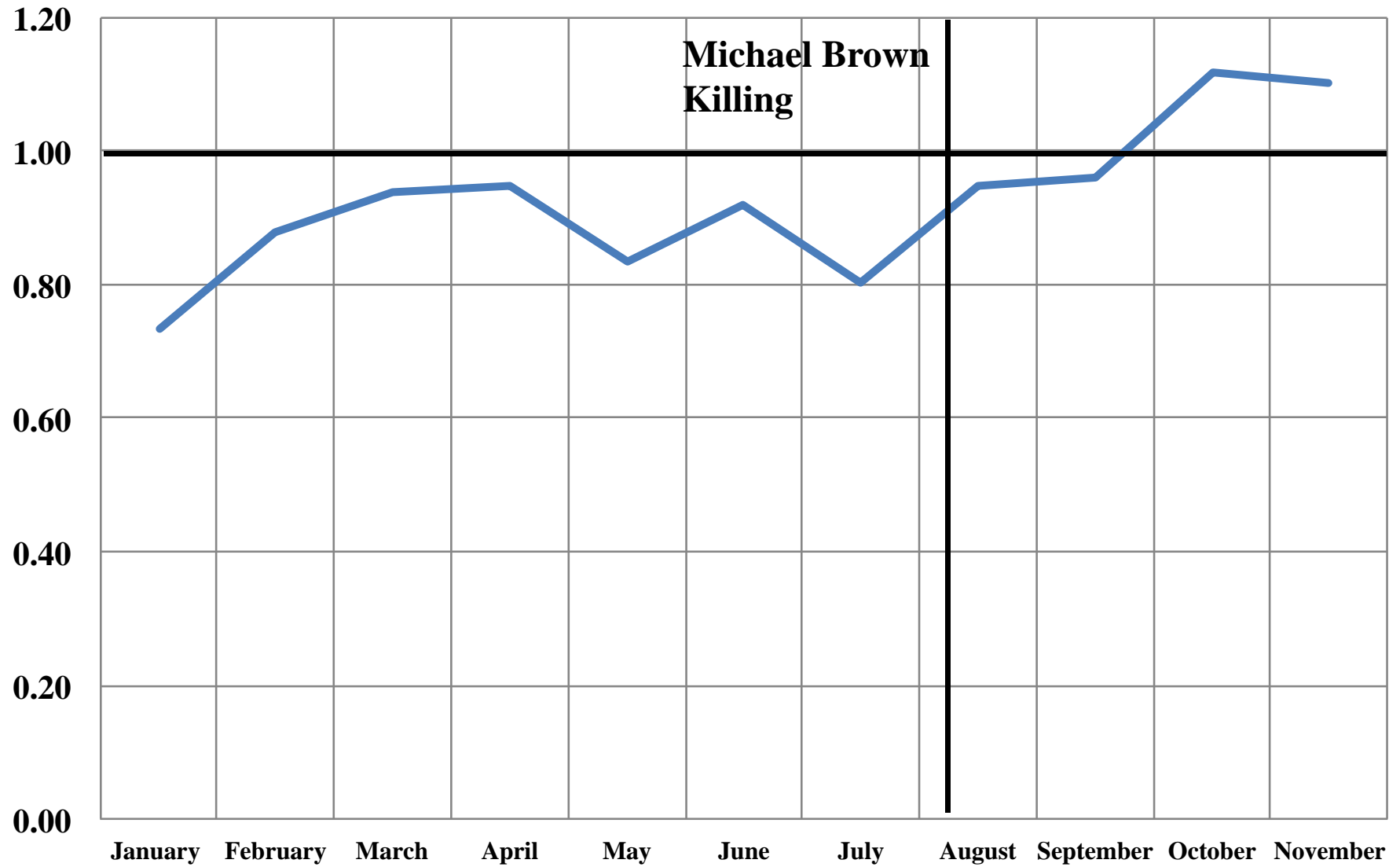
Ratio of Monthly Homicides, 2014 v. 2013



Ratio of Monthly Violent Crimes, 2014 v. 2013



Ratio of Monthly Property Crimes, 2014 v. 2013



Research on Police Shootings

Three Limitations of Prior Research

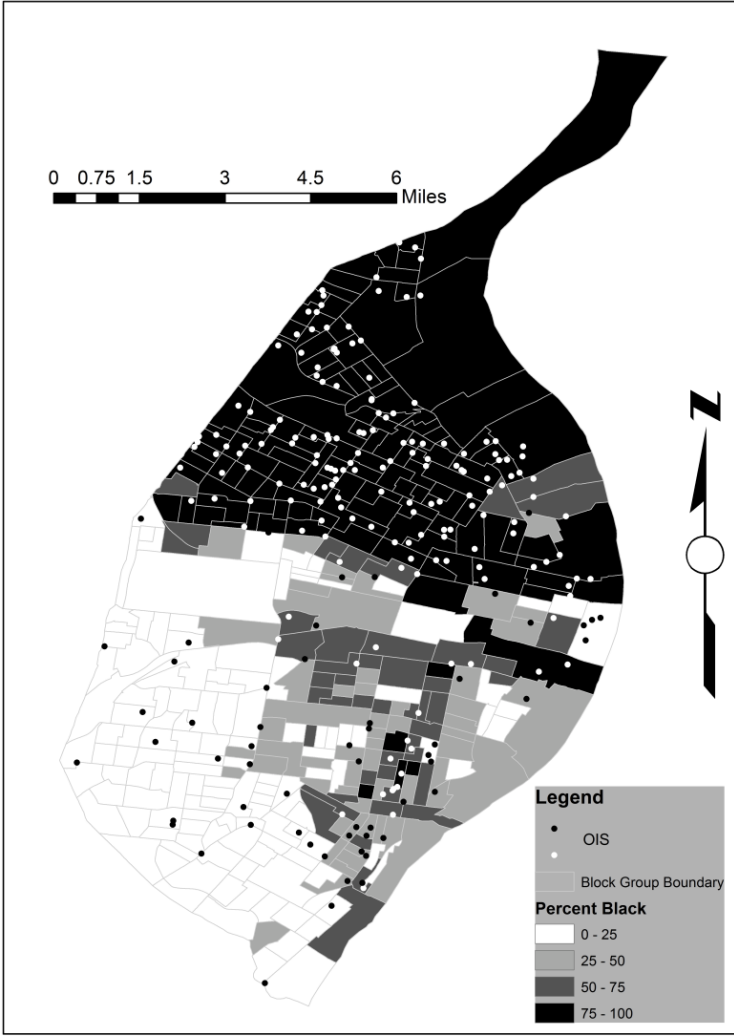
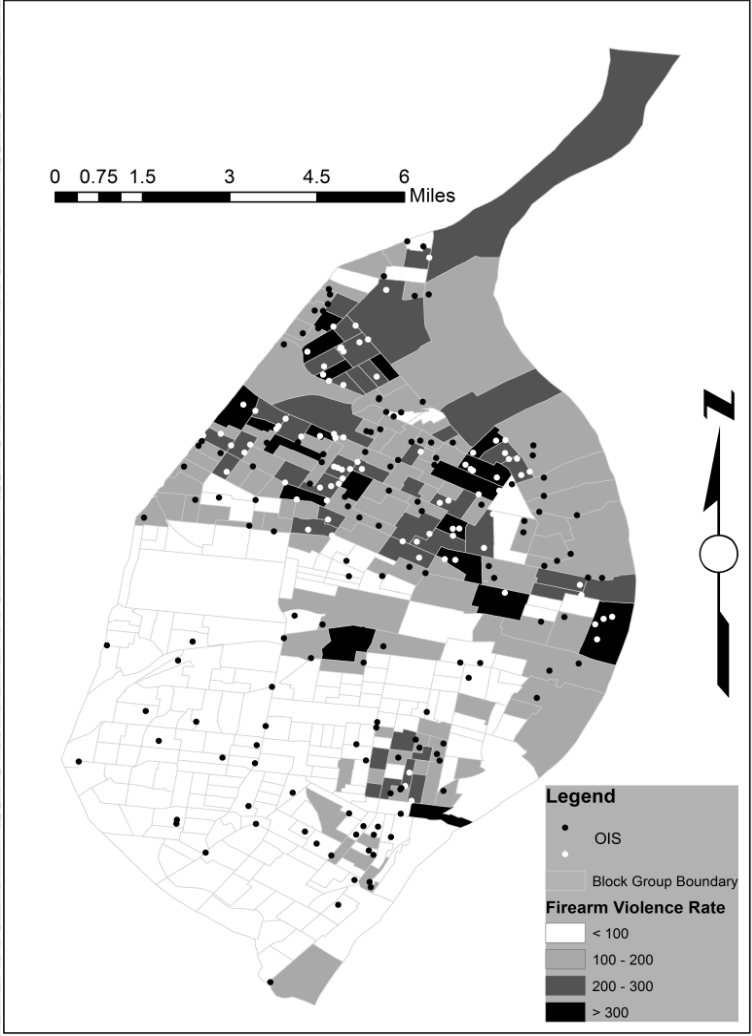
- Official counts of deadly force inaccurate
 - Vital Statistics and FBI's SHR data undercount (a lot) and the error is not constant
- Dead bodies a poor indicator of deadly force
 - Most OIS's cause non-fatal or no injuries and ratios are not constant
- Large spatial aggregations (cities and states) mask substantial heterogeneity within units

St. Louis Study*

- Outcome: All intentional officer-involved shootings, 2003-2012 within city boundaries (N=230)
- Unit of analysis: Neighborhoods (census block groups) N=355
- Range of n'hood OISs (0-5)
 - 0 208 (58.6%)
 - 1 92 (25.9%)
 - 2 36 (10.1%)
 - 3+ 19 (5.4%)

*Klinger, David, Richard Rosenfeld, Daniel Isom, and Michael Deckard. Forthcoming. The micro-ecology of deadly force. *Criminology & Public Policy*.

OISs by Neighborhood Violence and Racial Composition



Key St. Louis Findings

- Neighborhood violence drives deadly force
 - but only to a point
 - Racial comp and SES exert indirect effects thru violence
- Relationship between violence and OIS nonlinear – more OISs at mid-levels of firearm violence
- Possible explanations
 - Savvy Suspects
 - Mindful Officers

Future Directions

- Replicate in other cities
 - Will the nonlinear effect hold?
- Savvy suspects and mindful officers?
 - Rooted in sound theory and research in other areas, but presents research challenges
 - Points to complexity of topic; how space might shape officer and citizen perspectives on danger and violence
- Why *not* Ferguson?

“Expanding the Narrative”

- Common refrain among Ferguson protesters
- Individual-level remedies
 - Better training
 - Reduce implicit bias
- Greater emphasis needed on *situations*
 - What circumstances distinguish police-citizen encounters that involve deadly force from those that end peacefully?
 - Violence is hard, not easy.
 - Violence requires overcoming “confrontational tension and fear” (Collins 2008).
 - What conditions produce “forward panic” by police (Collins 2008)?

Collins, Randall. 2008. *Violence: A Micro-Sociological Theory*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press.

Recommendations

- The Department of Justice should establish a database on *all* police shootings that includes, at a minimum:
 - Number and characteristics (sex, age, race, ethnicity) of officers and civilians
 - City and street address of the incident
 - Outcomes: fatal and nonfatal injuries
- Eventually, the system should include all incidents in which less-lethal weapons or physical force capable of producing serious injury is used.

Without Comprehensive and Comparative Data on Police Use of Force, the National Debate Will Continue to be Based on Myths, Half-Truths, and Political Ideology

Appendix: St. Louis Study

Incident Types

- Suspicious persons or vehicles (n=49)
- Person with gun/shots fired (n=45)
- Robberies (n=28)
- Stolen vehicles (n=17)
- Car prowls (n=16)
- Burglaries (n=13)
- Traffic stops (n=13)
- Others fewer than 10 cases (e.g., domestics)

Selected OIS Descriptives

Table 1. Selected Characteristics of Police Shooting Incidents in St. Louis, 2003 – 2012

	Mean	Sd	Min	Max	N
Officers present	2.00	1.58	1	12	225
Officers firing	1.37	.94	1	8	230
Shots by officers	6.50	12.46	1	132	226
Suspects present	1.65	1.10	1	5	228
Suspects fired at	1.05	.25	1	3	228
Suspects struck	.53	.60	0	4	230
Suspects killed	.16	.38	0	2	230

Source: SLMPD

Officers and Suspects

- 315 shooters across 230 cases
 - 71% had ten or fewer years on job
 - Mean age=34 (range 22-56)
 - 96% male
 - 66% white, 34% black (nearly identical to racial composition of SLMPD)
- 373 suspects
 - 244 fired at by officers
 - 123 hit by gunfire, 37 fatalities
 - Mean age=24
 - 96% male
 - 93% black (nearly identical to racial composition of murder suspects and victims)

Bivariate Relationships

Table 2. Block Group Characteristics by Number of Officer-Involved Shootings

	Officer-Involved Shootings						<i>p</i> ^a
	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Index of firearm violence	.752	1.33	2.05	2.22	3.03	2.21	.000
Percent black	38.6	59.7	78.9	85.4	71.6	92.7	.000
Percent Hispanic	2.90	2.93	1.26	4.78	0.00	1.13	.309
Percent age 18-24	8.35	10.9	9.18	11.4	6.04	18.6	.037
Percent age 50 and over	28.4	30.0	29.5	24.2	29.2	29.6	.514
Percent same hh 5 yrs.	66.6	66.0	72.1	62.3	62.1	75.1	.229
Percent owner-occ. hh	44.9	38.4	35.8	23.0	20.7	35.4	.001
Percent college	25.7	18.1	13.8	10.4	17.9	6.79	.000
Percent unemployed	7.15	8.48	9.68	8.60	21.6	6.34	.267
Median income (\$)	38778	33699	29263	23913	34696	33518	.002
(N)	(208)	(92)	(36)	(16)	(3)	(3)	

Source: SLMPD; American Community Survey

^a Evaluated by F-test

Poisson Regression Results for Officer Involved Shootings^a

Table 5. Poisson Regression Results for Officer Involved Shootings^a

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5 ^b
faviol	.520** (.062)	.520** (.062)	.522** (.060)	1.45** (.256)	1.26** (.294)
pctblack	.589+ (.303)	.478 (.971)	.591* (.297)	-.064 (.333)	-.054 (.488)
md\$.012* (.006)	.012* (.006)	.024 (.015)	.012* (.005)	.007 (.007)
pctownocc	-.660+ (.348)	-.674+ (.370)	-.726* (.361)	-.267 (.345)	-.361 (.416)
pctcollege	-1.12+ (.624)	-1.12+ (.628)	-1.18+ (.619)	-.960 (.607)	-.441 (.771)
spatial lag	.153 (.117)	.151 (.118)	.154 (.117)	.105 (.109)	.003* (.001)
pctblack ²	---	.098 (.847)	---	---	---
md\$ ²	---	---	-.0001 (.0001)	---	---
faviol ²	---	---	---	-.174** (.047)	-.140** (.050)
pseudo R ²	.208	.208	.209	.225	.246
Wald chi ²	226**	226**	230	218**	189**
(N)	(355)	(355)	(355)	(355)	(320)

Source: SLMPD; American Community Survey

^a Standard errors (in parentheses) adjusted for clustering within block groups.

^b Shootings that occurred when the officer was off duty omitted.

**p < .01 *p < .05 +p < .10 (two-tailed)

See note to Table 3 for variable descriptions.

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