

Homicide, Police Violence, and Social Unrest

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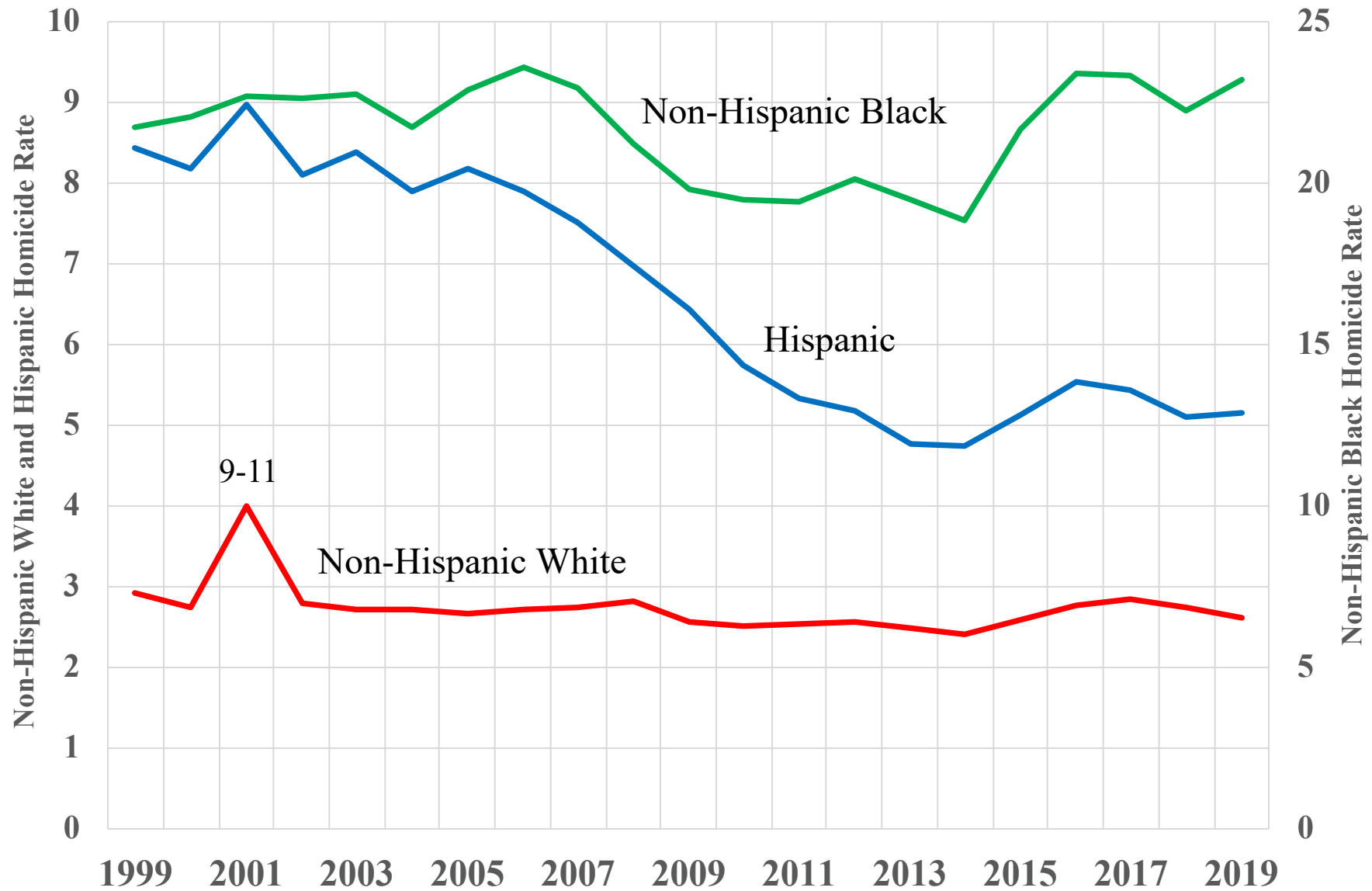
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Overview

- Two significant homicide increases in last 20 years
 - After Ferguson (2015-17)
 - After George Floyd was killed (May 2020)
- Three explanations
 - De-policing
 - Police legitimacy crisis
 - Opioid epidemic
- Recommendations
 - Police reform
 - Services, support for those at high risk
 - Proactive, protective enforcement

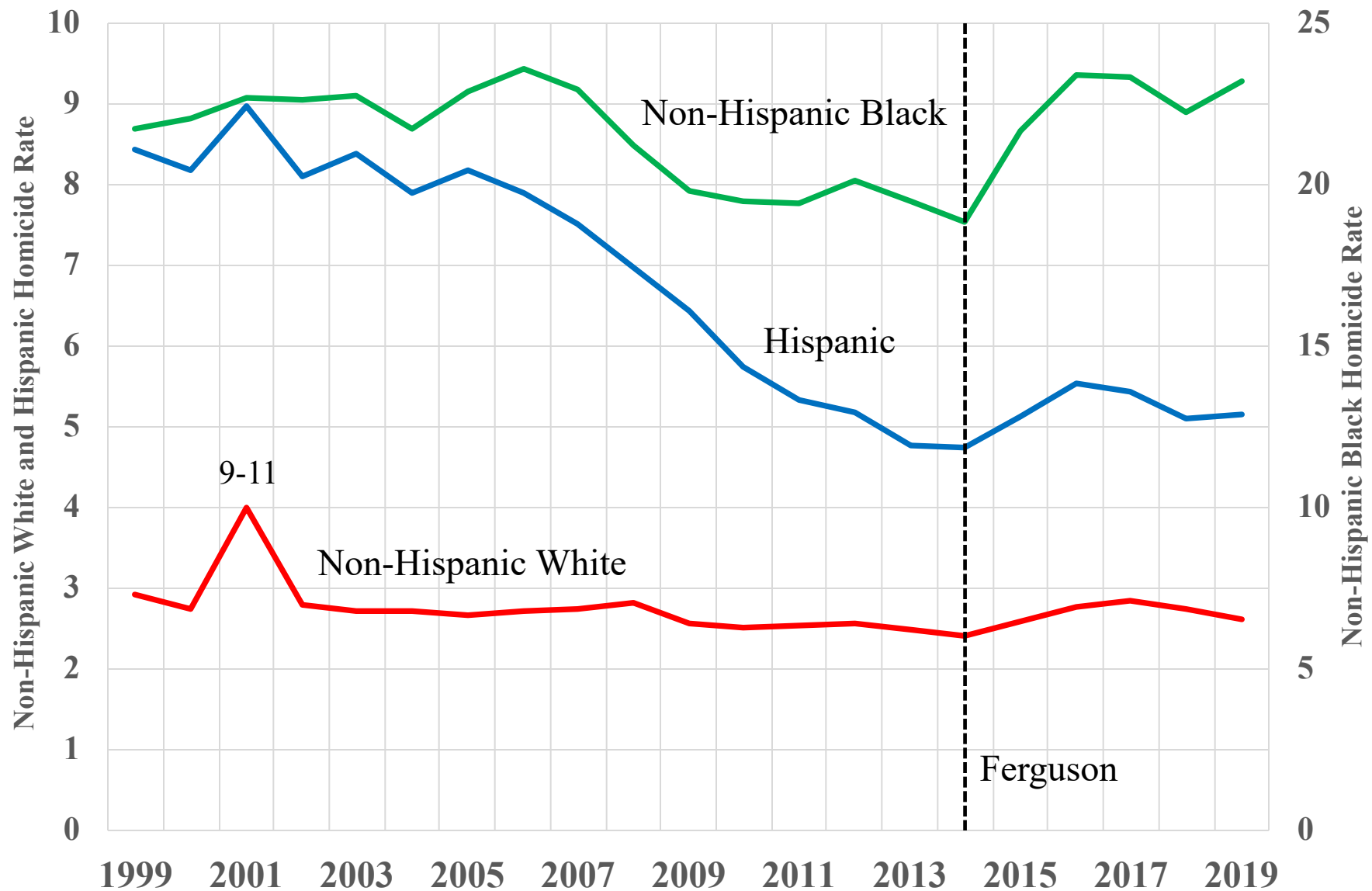
Homicide, 2015-2017

Figure 1. Homicides per 100,000 Non-Hispanic Black, Non-Hispanic White, and Hispanic Population, 1999-2019



Source: US Vital Statistics

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Homicide Increase After Ferguson

	Homicide Rate*		% Change
	<u>2014</u>	<u>2017</u>	
Total	5.0	6.0	20.0%
Non-Hispanic Black	18.8	23.3	23.9%
Non-Hispanic White	2.4	2.9	20.8%
Hispanic	4.7	5.4	14.9%

* Per 100,000 Population

Explaining the Increase

- De-Policing
- Police Legitimacy Crisis
- Opioid Epidemic

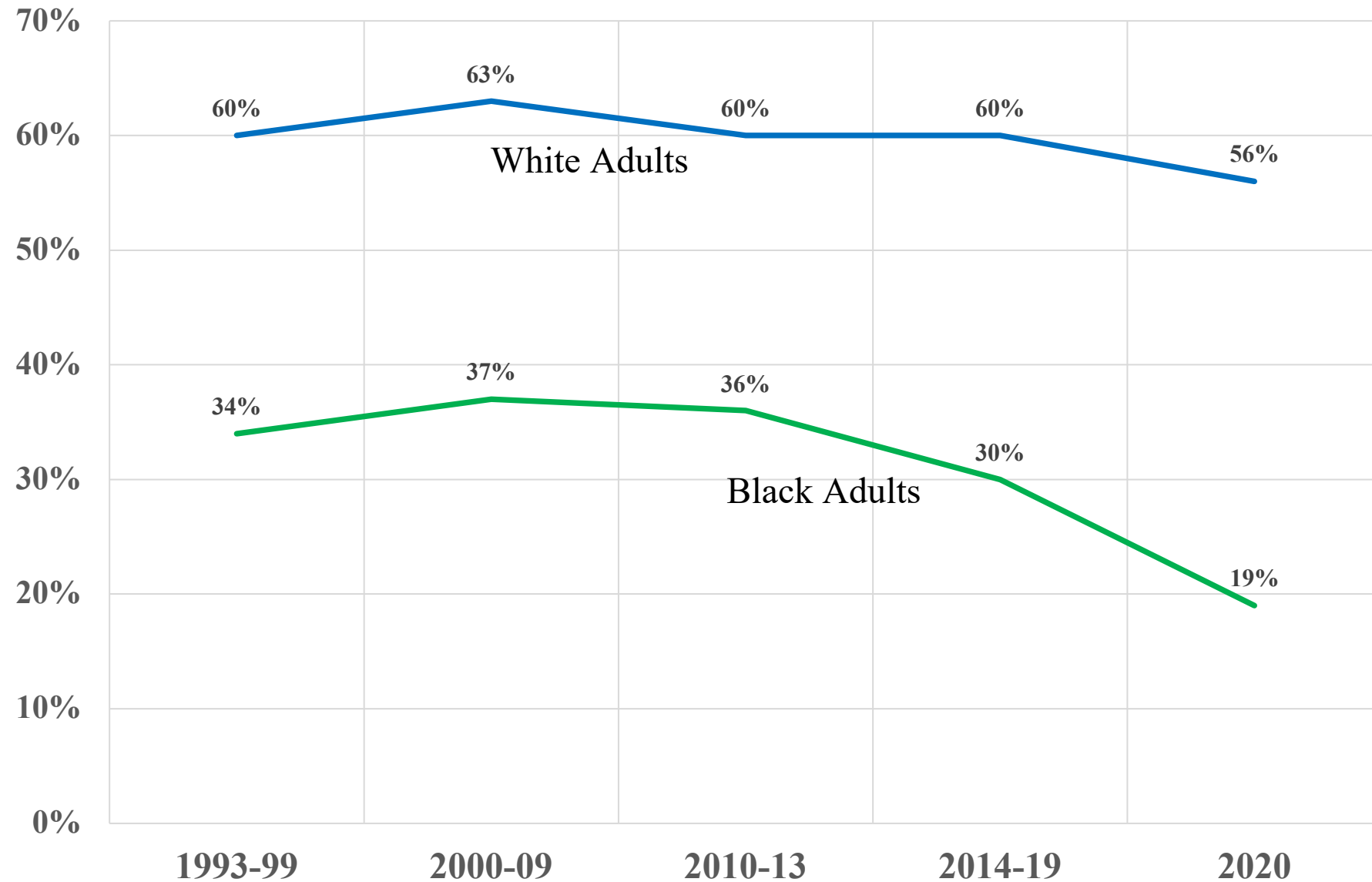
De-Policing

- Very strong assumption about the impact of policing on homicide
- Robbery, burglary and larceny rates dropped; motor vehicle theft up 10%
- Claim is largely anecdotal or based on survey data without a baseline
- Study of 50 large cities found no effect of declining arrests on homicide after Ferguson (Rosenfeld and Wallman 2019)

Police Legitimacy

- Police legitimacy linked to confidence in and cooperation with police (Mazerolle, Bennett, Davis, et al. 2013)
- Racial gap in confidence has widened

Figure 2. Percentage of Black and White Adults With a Great Deal or Quite Alot of Confidence in the Police, 1993-2020



Source: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/317114/black-white-adults-confidence-diverges-police.aspx>

Opioid Epidemic

- Recent research has linked homicide to opioid demand, in both the black and white population (Rosenfeld, Wallman, and Roth 2020)
- Opioid demand has grown sharply over the past 20 years
- The hypothesized mechanism is the street drug market
- May be a better explanation of homicide rise among whites than diminished police legitimacy

Homicide, 2020

Homicide During the Coronavirus Pandemic

- Homicide rates in large cities rose by ~30% in 2020 over 2019 (Rosenfeld, Apt, and Lopez 2021)
- Sharpest increases began in late May and early June—George Floyd was killed on May 25, 2020
- Increase peaked during summer
- Homicide rates associated with residential mobility—smaller increases during periods of home confinement
 - Homicide rate after April of 2020 would have been an estimated 29% higher if home confinement had remained at the April peak
- Increases concentrated in disadvantaged communities of color
 - Fully half of the St. Louis increase occurred in just six of 79 neighborhoods where 92% of the residents are black and 40% are poor

Figure 11. Percentage Change in Homicides, 2019 - 2020

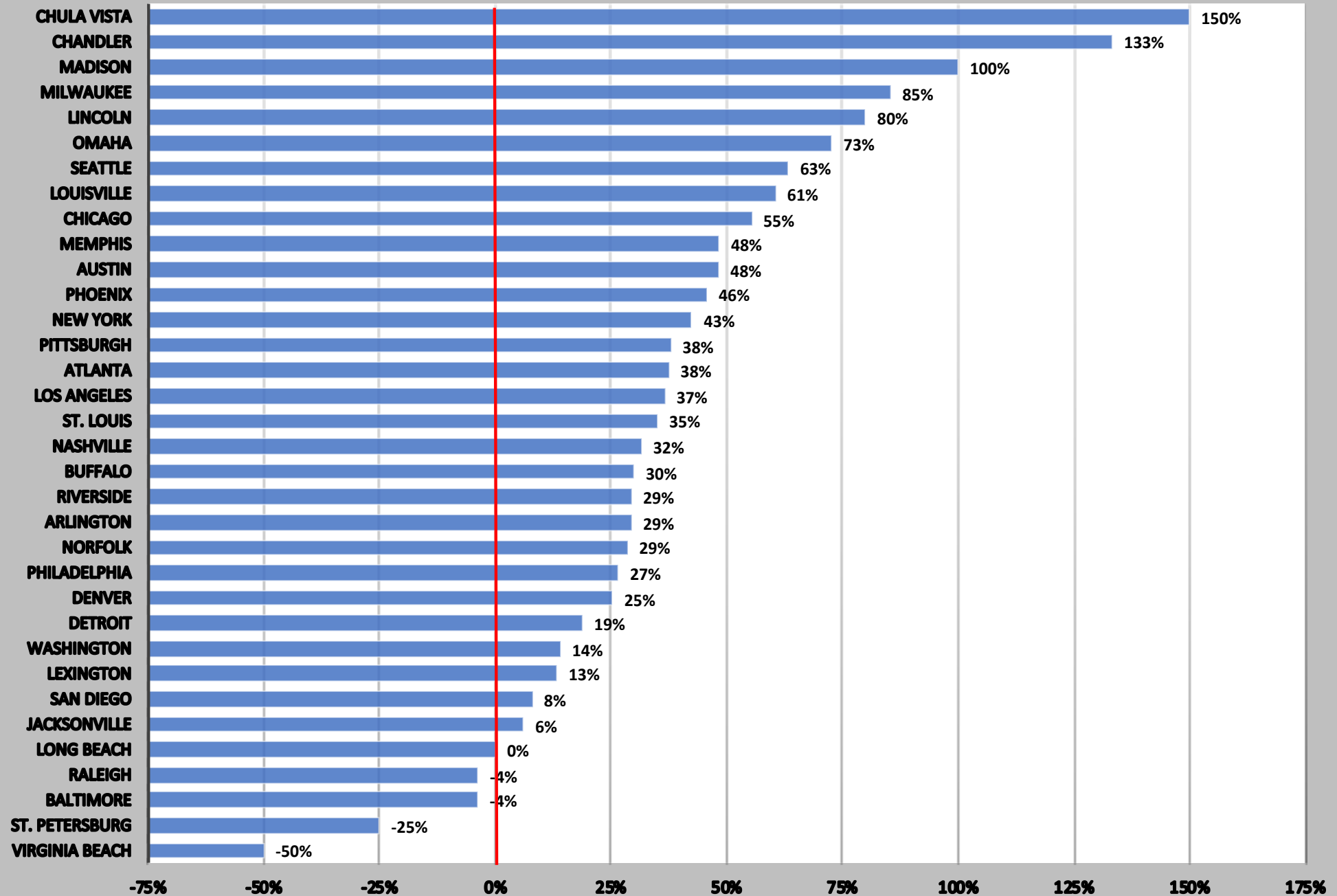
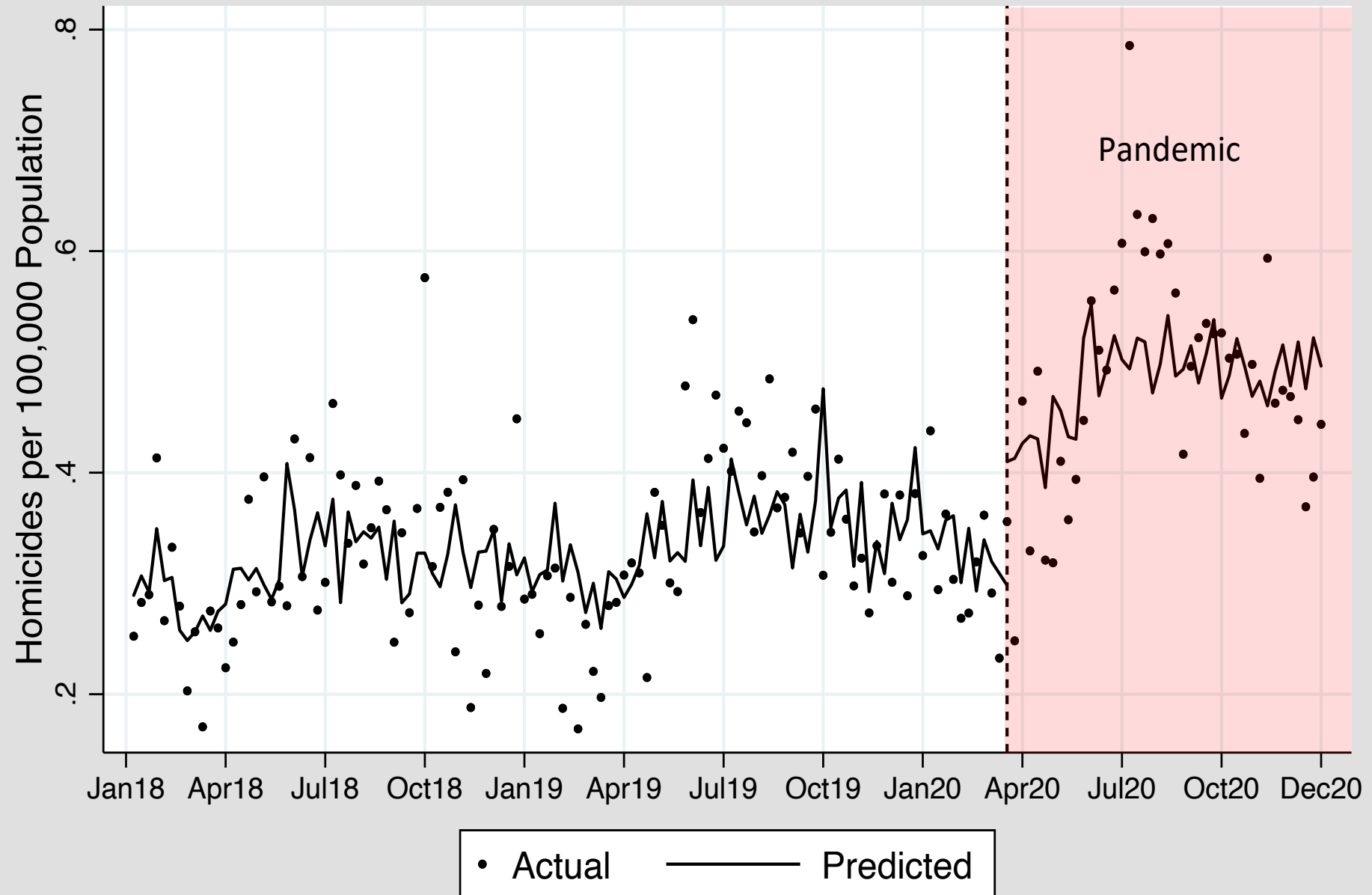


Figure 1. Average Weekly Homicide Rate in 25 Cities, 2018-2020



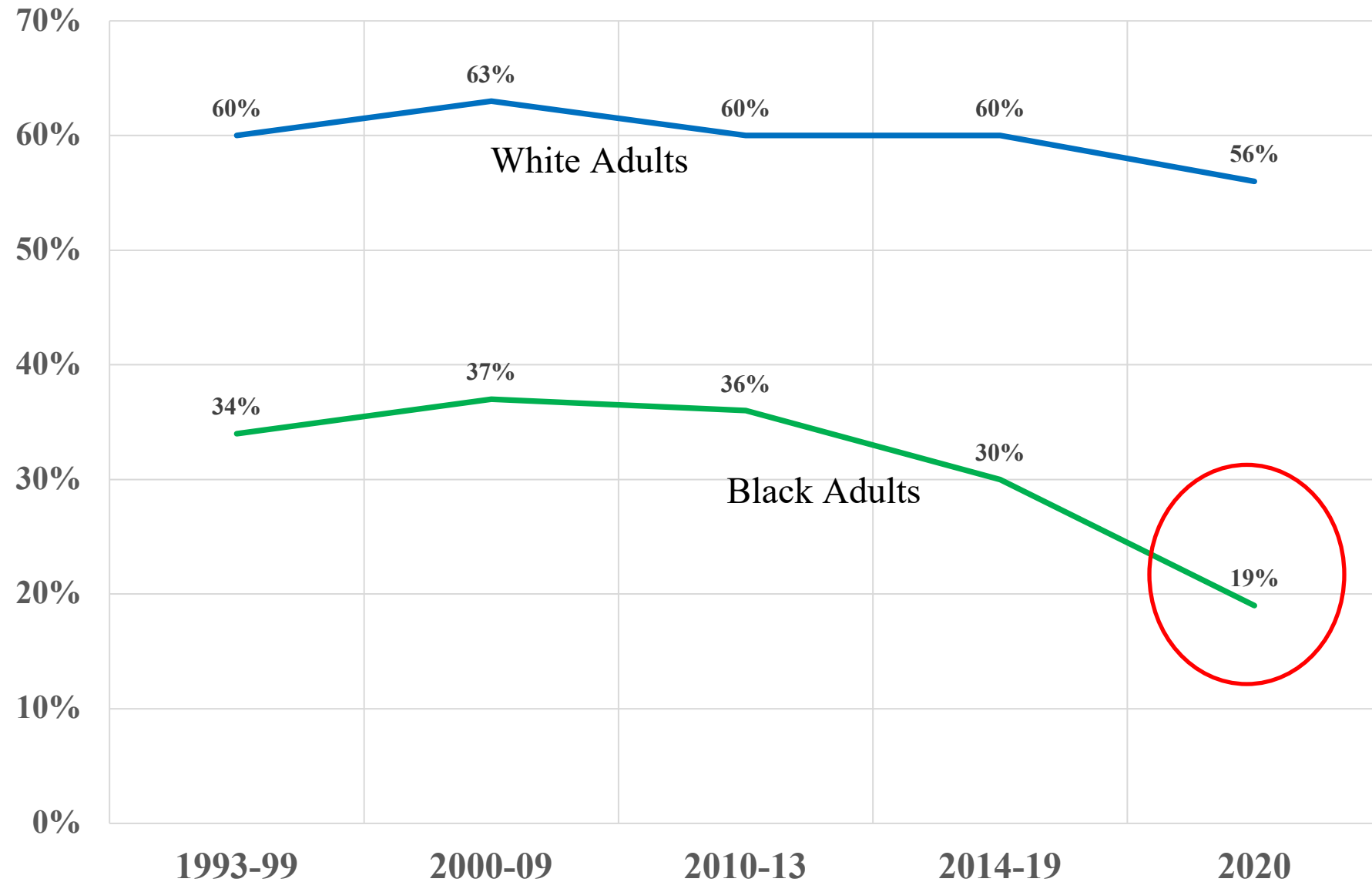
Regression with Newey-West standard errors - lag(6)

Explanations

- De-policing?
 - Impact of pandemic (Lum, Maupin, and Stoltz 2020)
- Opioid epidemic?
 - CDC: Overdose Deaths Accelerating During COVID-19*
- Police legitimacy?
 - Historic drop in confidence in police among African-Americans

* <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/p1218-overdose-deaths-covid-19.html>

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Discussion

- Homicide increases after Ferguson and George Floyd's death
- Drop in police legitimacy a likely culprit
- Stemming the recent increase
 - Police reform
 - Increase accountability for misconduct
 - Redirect certain activities to other agencies (<https://theappeal.org/the-lab/polling-memos/likely-voters-support-non-police-emergency-response/>)
 - Services and support for those at high risk
 - Redouble proactive and protective policing
- Other explanations? Other recommendations?

References and Further Information

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