

Fatal Force

1,027 people have been shot and killed by police in the past year

Updated **June 15, 2020**

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In 2015, The Washington Post began to log [every fatal shooting](#) by an on-duty police officer in the United States. In that time there have been [more than 5,000 such shootings](#) recorded by The Post.

Jump to the database

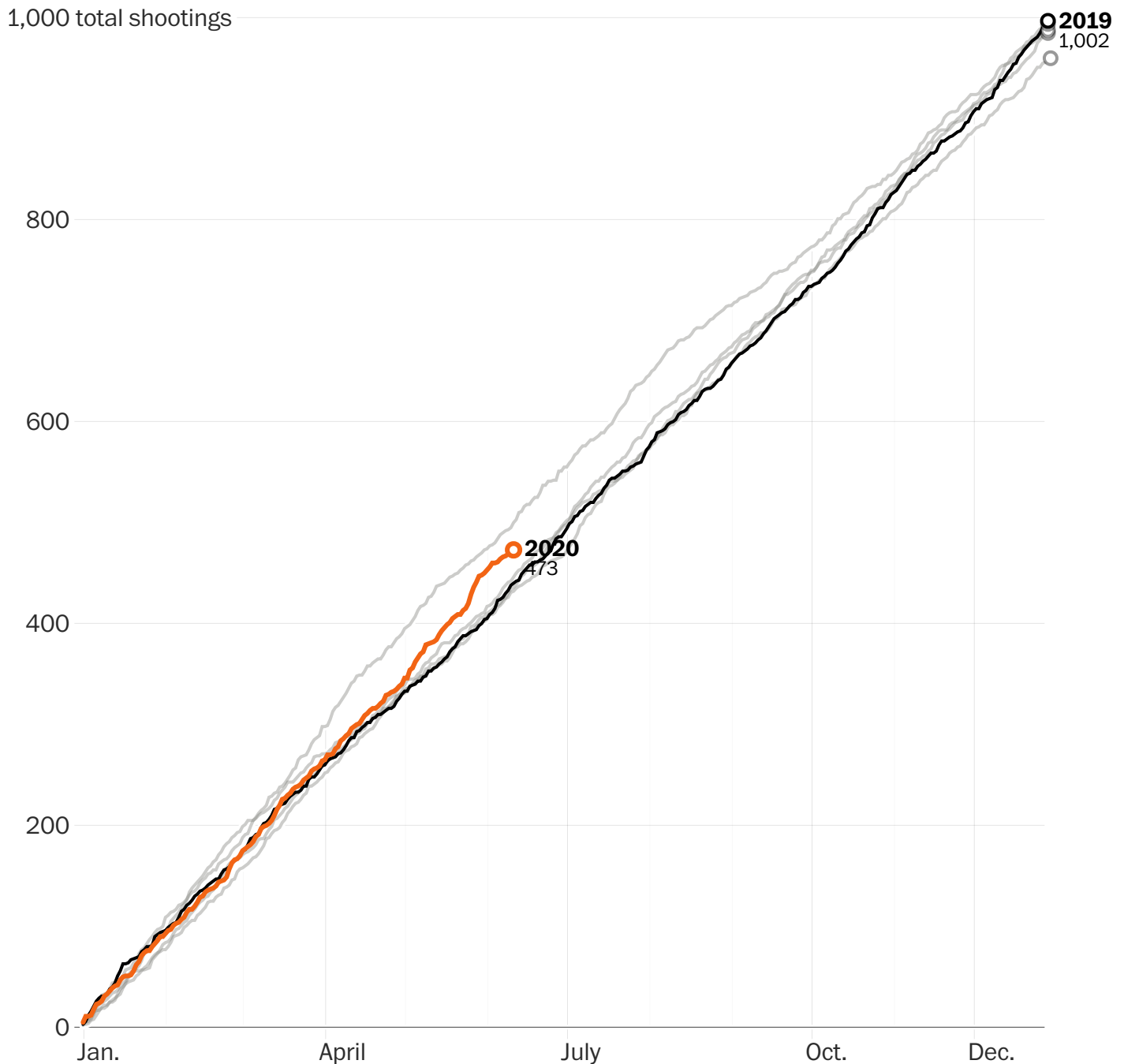
After [Michael Brown, an unarmed black man, was killed](#) in 2014 by police in Ferguson, Mo., a Post investigation found that the [FBI undercounted fatal police shootings](#) by more than half. This is because reporting by police departments is voluntary and many departments fail to do so.

The Post's data relies primarily on news accounts, social media postings and police reports. Analysis of more than five years of data reveals that the number and circumstances of fatal

shootings and the overall demographics of the victims have remained relatively constant.

Rate of shootings remains steady

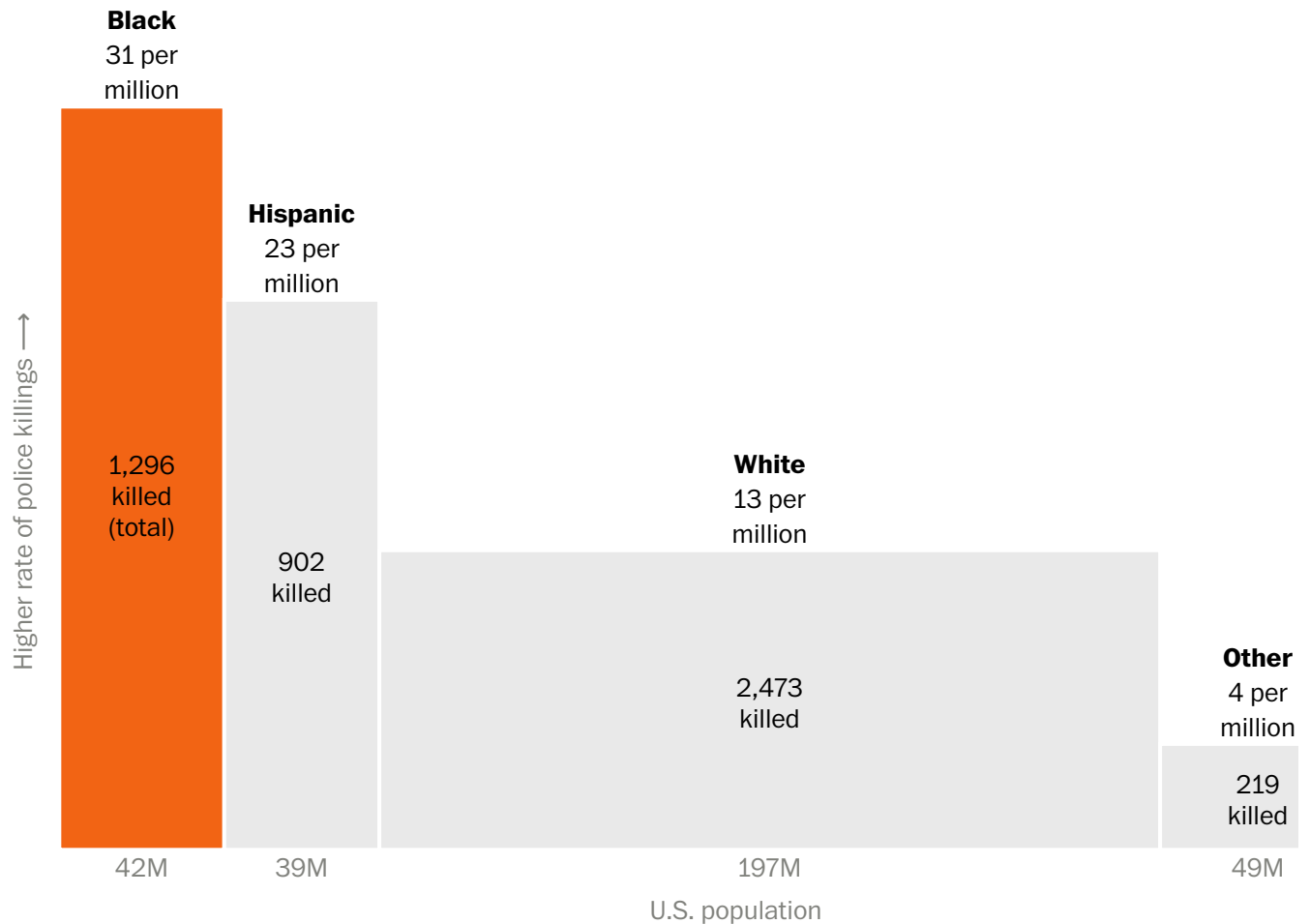
Despite the unpredictable events that lead to fatal shootings, police nationwide have shot and killed [almost the same number of people](#) annually — nearly 1,000 — since The Post began its project. Probability theory may offer an explanation. It holds that the quantity of rare events in huge populations tends to remain stable absent major societal changes, such as a fundamental shift in police culture or extreme restrictions on gun ownership.



Black Americans are killed at a much higher rate than white Americans

Although half of the people shot and killed by police are white, [black Americans are shot at a disproportionate rate](#). They account for less than 13 percent of the U.S. population, but are killed by police at more than twice the rate of white Americans. Hispanic Americans are also killed by police at a disproportionate rate.

The rate at which **black Americans are killed by police** is more than twice as high as **the rate for white Americans**.



Shootings happen across the country

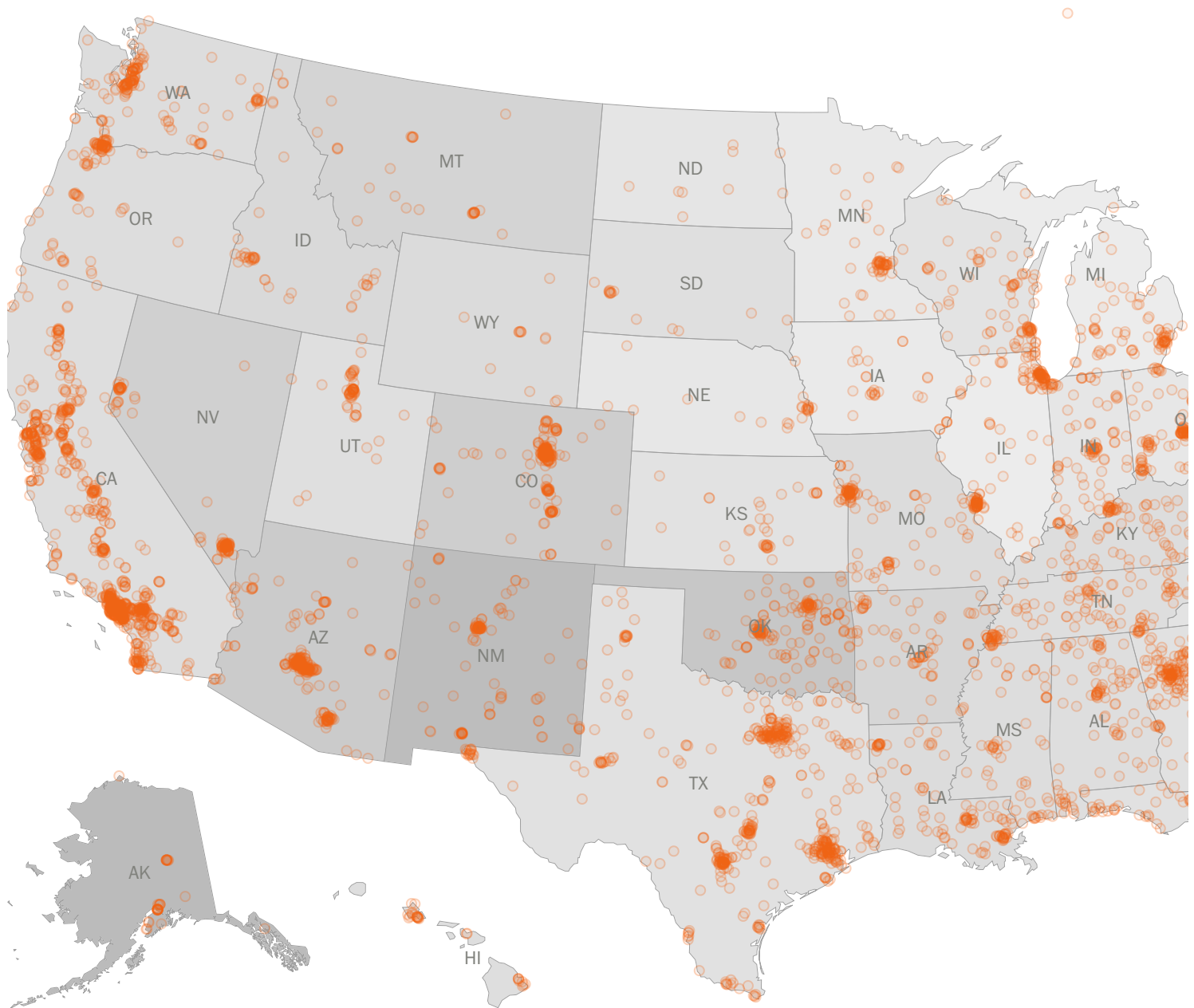
Police shootings have taken place in every state and have occurred more frequently in cities where populations are concentrated. States with the highest rates of shootings are New Mexico, Alaska and Oklahoma.

Each circle on the map below marks the location of a deadly shooting.

Shootings per million people

0

53



There are 256 shootings with unverified locations that are not shown on the map.

Search the database

This database contains records of every fatal shooting in the United States by a police officer in the line of duty since Jan. 1, 2015. It is updated regularly as fatal shootings are reported and as facts emerge about individual cases.

+ State + Gender + Race + Age + Mental illness + Weapon

+ Body camera + Fleeing the scene + Year

5,408 people shot and killed by police

Rayshard Brooks,

a 27-year-old black man armed with a Taser, was shot on June 12, 2020, in a parking lot in Atlanta, Ga.

No/unknown mental illness Body cam recording Fleeing by foot

Sources: [ajc.com](#) • [Atlanta InTown Paper](#) • [ajc](#)

1 of 5,408

The Post's reporting on fatal police shootings

[Months after a fatal police shooting, a young officer turns his gun on himself](#) Dec. 19, 2018

[Fatal police shootings of unarmed people have significantly declined, experts say](#)
May 7, 2018

[Nationwide, police shot and killed nearly 1,000 people in 2017](#) Jan. 6, 2018

[In two years, police killed 86 people brandishing guns that look real — but aren't](#) Dec. 18, 2016

[In fatal shootings by police, 1 in 5 officers' names go undisclosed](#) April 1, 2016

About this story

The Washington Post's database contains records of every fatal shooting in the United States by a police officer in the line of duty since Jan. 1, 2015.

In 2015, The Post began tracking more than a dozen details about each killing — including the race of the deceased, the circumstances of the shooting, whether the person was armed and

whether the person was experiencing a mental-health crisis — by culling local news reports, law enforcement websites and social media, and by monitoring independent databases such as Killed by Police and Fatal Encounters. The Post conducted additional reporting in many cases.

The Post is documenting only those shootings in which a police officer, in the line of duty, shoots and kills a civilian — the circumstances that most closely parallel the 2014 killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo., which began the protest movement culminating in Black Lives Matter and an increased focus on police accountability nationwide. The Post is not tracking deaths of people in police custody, fatal shootings by off-duty officers or non-shooting deaths.

The FBI and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention log fatal shootings by police, but officials acknowledge that their data is incomplete. Since 2015, The Post has documented more than twice as many fatal shootings by police as recorded on average annually.

The Post's database is updated regularly as fatal shootings are reported and as facts emerge about individual cases. The Post seeks to make the database as comprehensive as possible. To provide information about fatal police shootings since Jan. 1, 2015, send us an email at policeshootingsfeedback@washpost.com.

Credits

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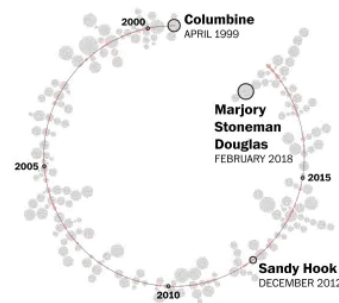


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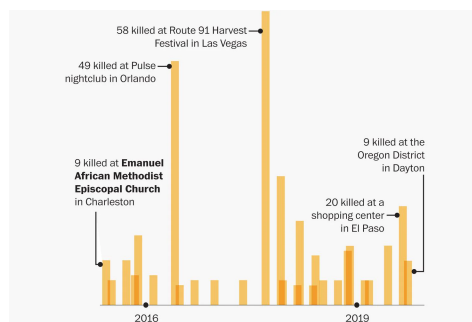
Analysis | More than 236,000 students have experienced gun violence at school since Columbine

The Washington Post spent months determining how many children have been exposed to gun violence during school hours since the Columbine High massacre in 1999.



More and deadlier: Mass shooting trends in America

Four or more people have been killed in a mass shooting every 47 days, on average, since June 17, 2015 when a young white supremacist killed nine people at a historic African American church in Charleston, S.C. This weekend, the 30th and 31st such shootings since then took place just 13 hours apart.



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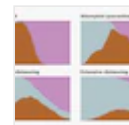
1 Fatal Force: 2019 police shootings database



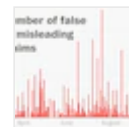
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