

Exploring NYPD activity from 2009 - 2016

[Code](#)

Theming and Design: Colorful Simplicity

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Thoughts on Theme

When choosing the elements to include in my theme I wanted to my graphs to have a clean, bright aesthetic. To this end, the backgrounds are white and most of the gridlines and axis lines are removed. Axis tick marks and numerical labels are left for ease of reading quantitative graphs, but legends are removed or labeled directly on the graph as much as possible.

The colors chosen for this theme are bold but not dark colors. They are intended to make the graphs easier to read and to stand in stark contrast with the black-and-white other lines and text. The main color, a bright purple, is also used as a highlight color. It is present in every graph and helps tie them together. When other colors aren't necessary the purple is contrasted with a light grey color.

[Code](#)

Color Palette for this Theme



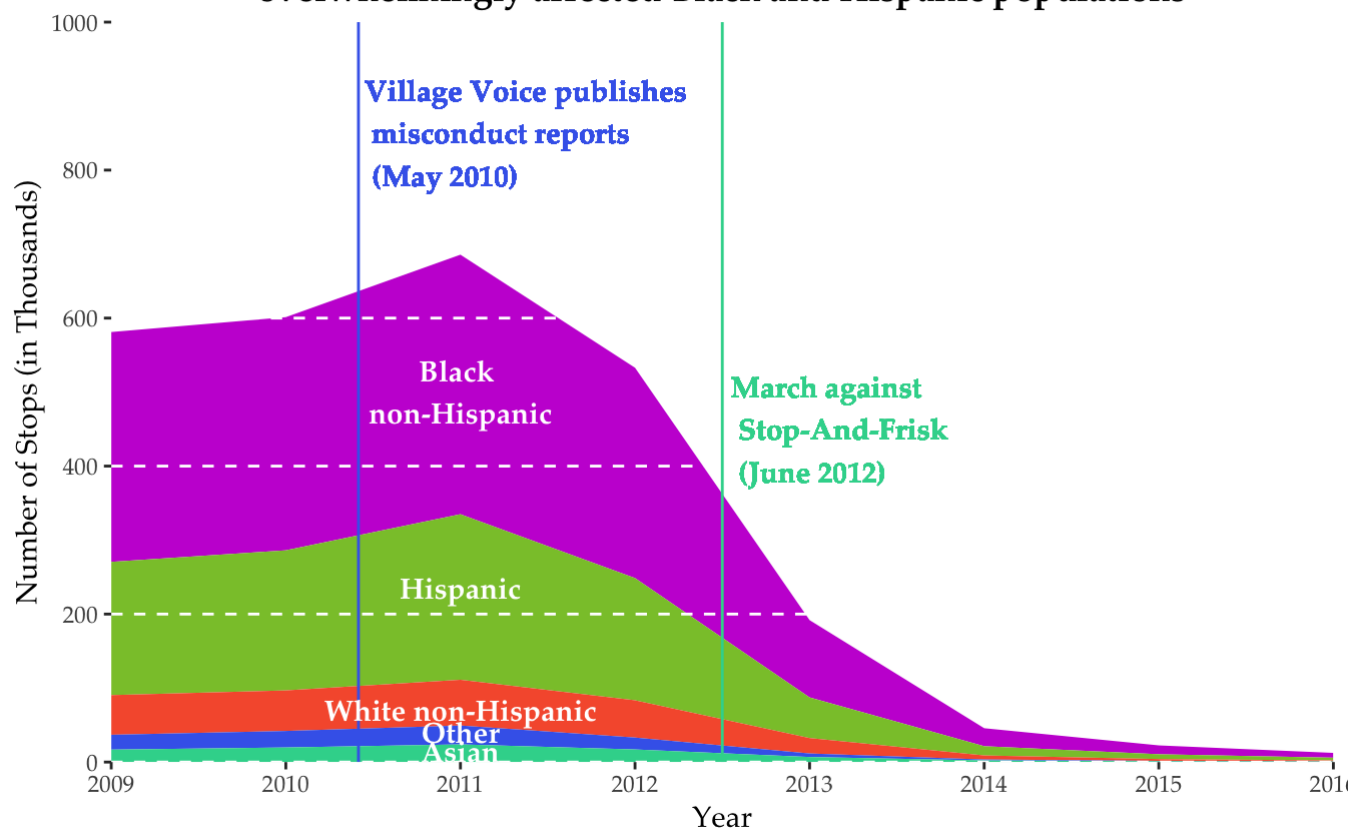
Stop and Frisk is a NYPD policy that was mainly started under Police Commissioner William Bratton. It was based on an idea introduced in the 1982 “broken windows” paper by social scientists James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling. Their analysis suggested that cracking down on small crimes like vandalism would help reduce the

occurrence of more serious ones. The policy allows police officers to stop, question, and search people without a warrant or suspicion of a crime.

The number of stops peaked in 2011, along with public outrage about the practice. The policy was heavily criticized for the high amount of force used, the lack of evidence that it improved safety, and most importantly, the fact that most of the people stopped were black or hispanic. Neither the Mayor or Police Commissioner provided an adequate explanation for any of those issues.

In May 2010 officer Adrian Schoolcraft sent the Village Voice recordings that documented orders he had received to stop, frisk, and arrest black people specifically in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood. This was concrete evidence of both the goals behind the policy and how it was carried out. Two years later protestors silently marched from lower Harlem to then-Mayor Bloomberg's house on the Upper East Side, demanding that Stop-and-Frisk be ended. That August the practice was deemed unconstitutional.

Stop-and-Frisk in NYC peaked in 2011; overwhelmingly affected Black and Hispanic populations

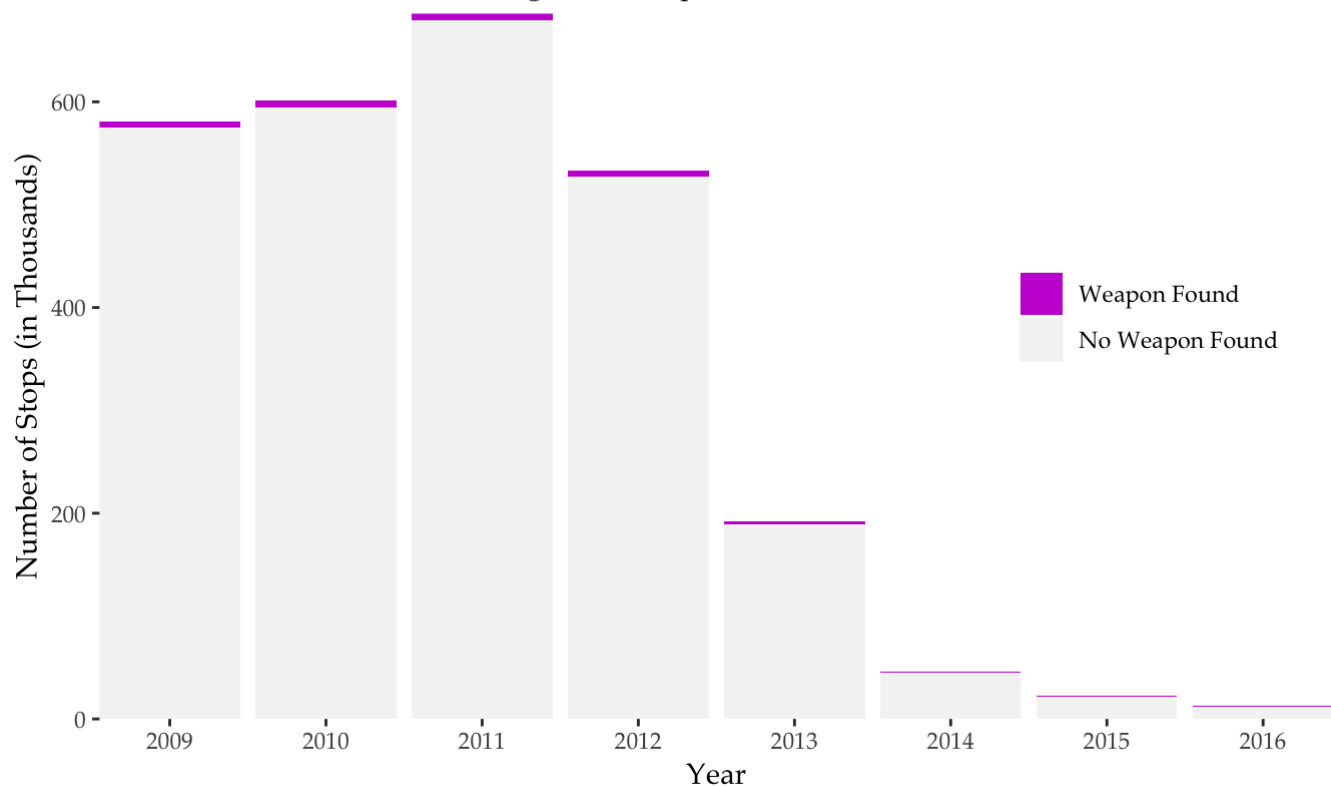


Data Source: NYPD Stop, Question, and Frisk Database

Police officers could stop people on the street for a variety of reasons, including fairly vague ones such as “furtive movements” or “wearing clothing indicative of a crime”. While stops were intended to be made based on probably-cause standards, in reality the decision making was up to the officer and their supervisors. Despite the large number of people detained on the street, few weapons of any kind were found. The number of weapons found stays relatively constant even as the number of total stops varies greatly.

Few weapons found through NYC Stop & Frisk Stops

Knives, Pistols, Assault Weapons, Rifles, and Machine Guns
found during NYPD stops from 2009 - 2016

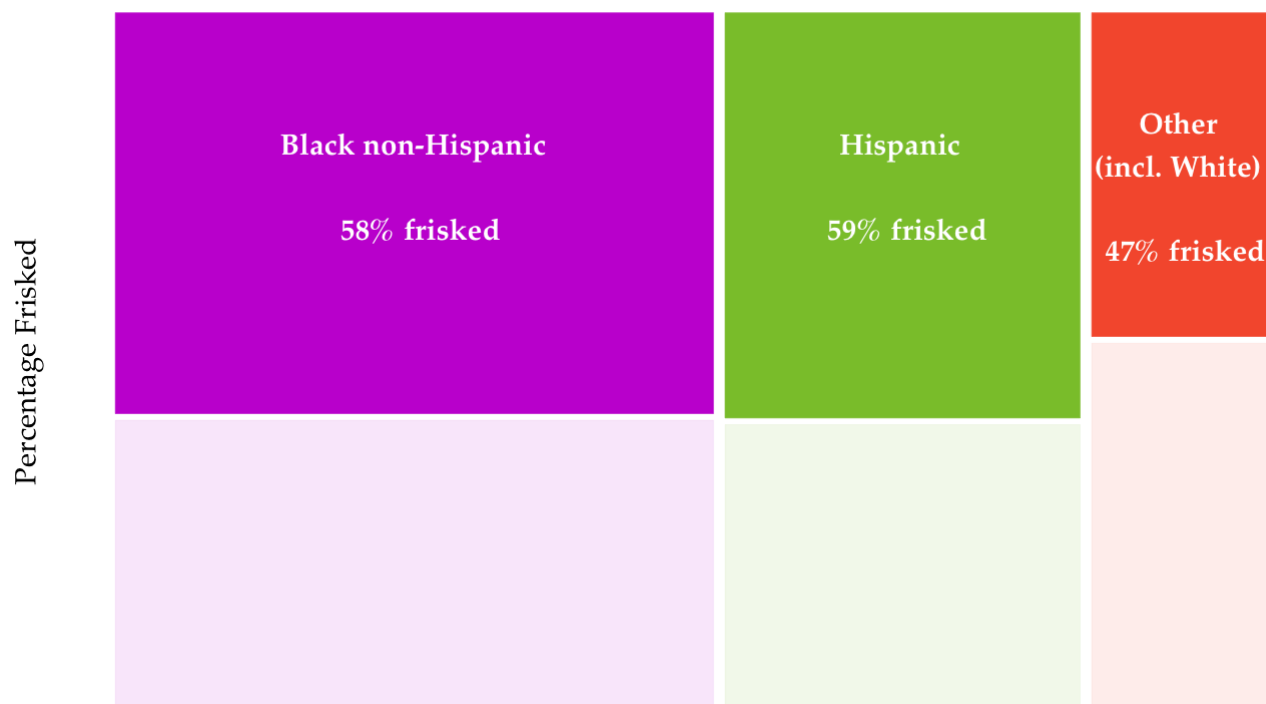


Data Source: NYPD Stop, Question, and Frisk Database

Stop-and-frisk gave officers the power to detain anyone on the street, and to search them immediately. Previous graphs show that the majority of stops involved black or hispanic individuals. Further, whether a person was frisked once they had already been stopped also varied greatly based on race.

Is everyone who is stopped frisked?

People who were stopped from 2009 - 2016 by race/ethnicity



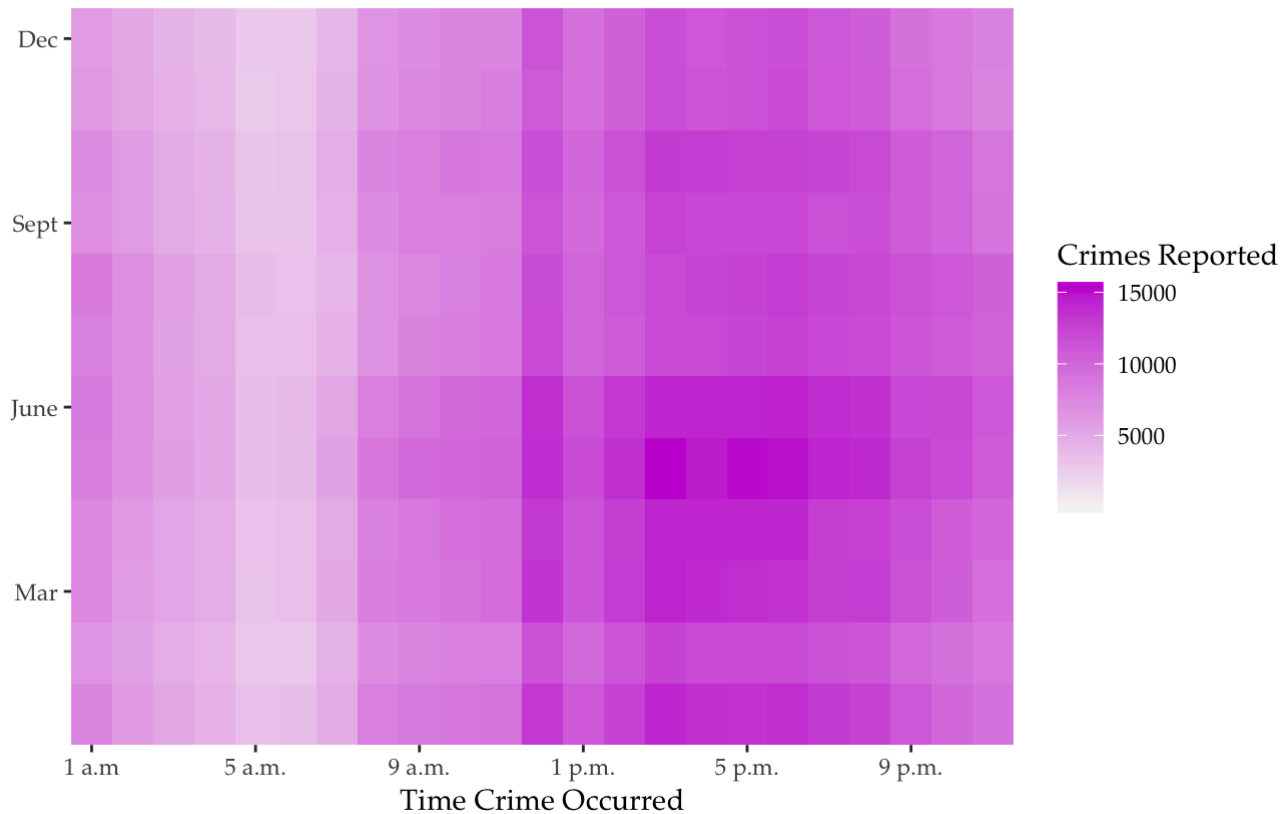
Stop-and-frisk stops

Data Source: NYPD Stop, Question, and Frisk Database

As in any major city, crimes take place in NYC at almost all times of day or night. When a crime is reported the exact time, date, and location of the occurrence is noted, along with other information. More crimes happen between about 3pm to 7pm in the evening, and around noon. The number of crimes is also higher in the springtime, from March to June, than at other times of the year.

Most crimes take place during the evening and in the springtime.

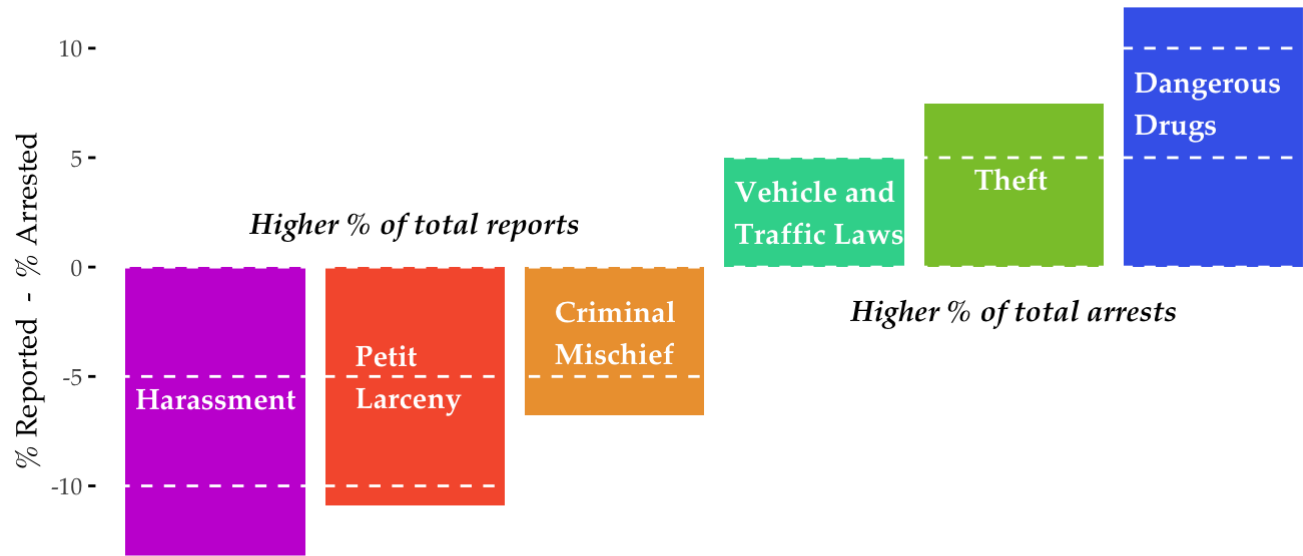
Dates and times crimes occur (2009 - 2016)



Data Source: NYC Open Data Complaints Data

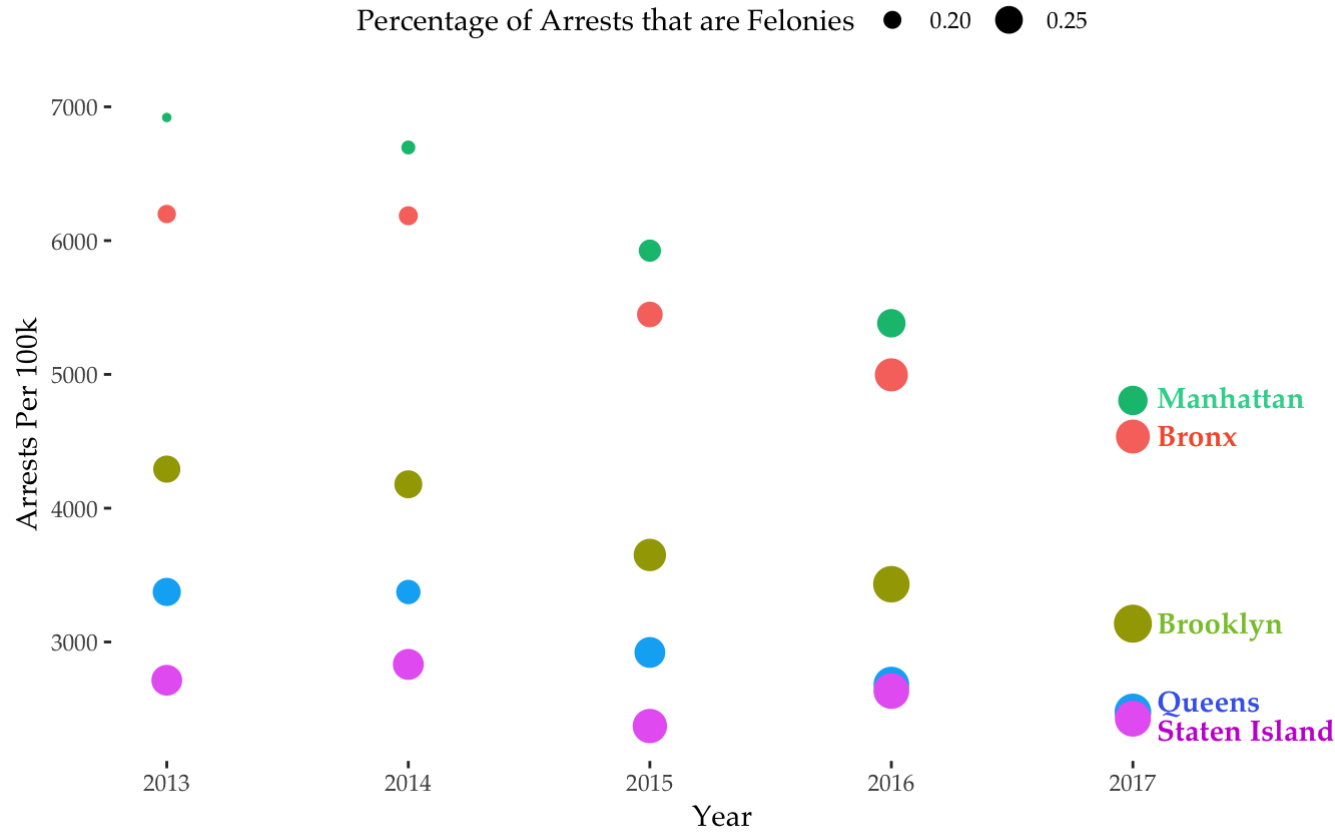
The next topic I was interested in was which crimes were the most common in NYC. A question that quickly came up was how to measure that - by the number of complaints or the number of actual arrests. This discrepancy varies greatly from crime to crime. Charges of “harassment 2” make up almost 15% of reported crimes to the NYPD but there are very few arrests for that offense. In contrast “dangerous drugs” account for about 5% of complaints called in but 18% of arrests.

The most-reported crimes do not make up the largest share of arrests
Offenses by share of total complaints / arrests 2009 - 2016



Data Source: NYC Open Data Arrests Data

The most crimes per 100k residents take place in Manhattan and the Bronx



Data Source: NYC Open Data Arrests Data