

# Is Inequality Making Us Sick?

The House that Racism Built

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# A Global Phenomenon

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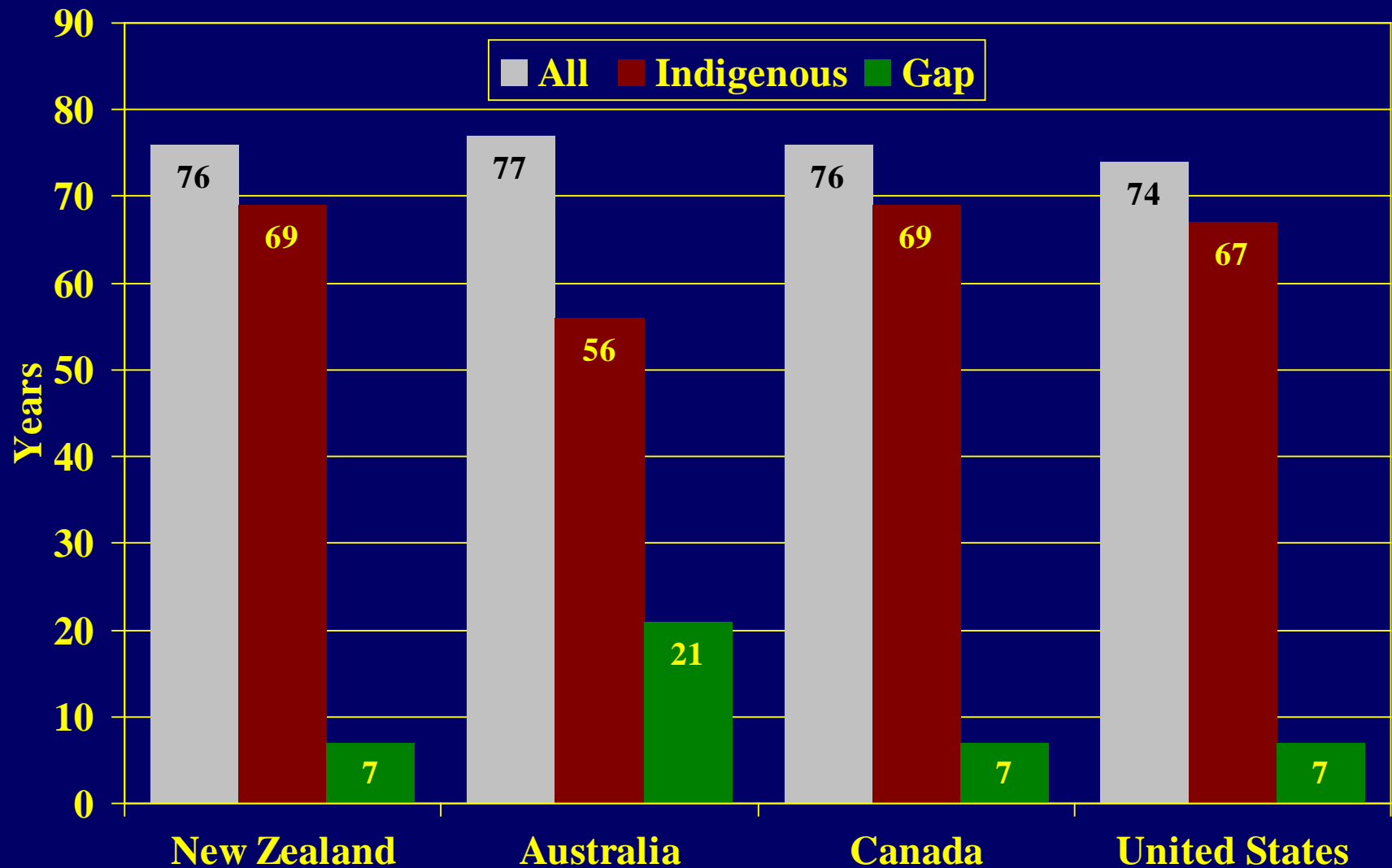
In race-conscious societies, such as,

- Australia
- Brazil
- New Zealand
- South Africa
- the U.K.
- United States,

non-dominant racial groups have worse health than the dominant racial group

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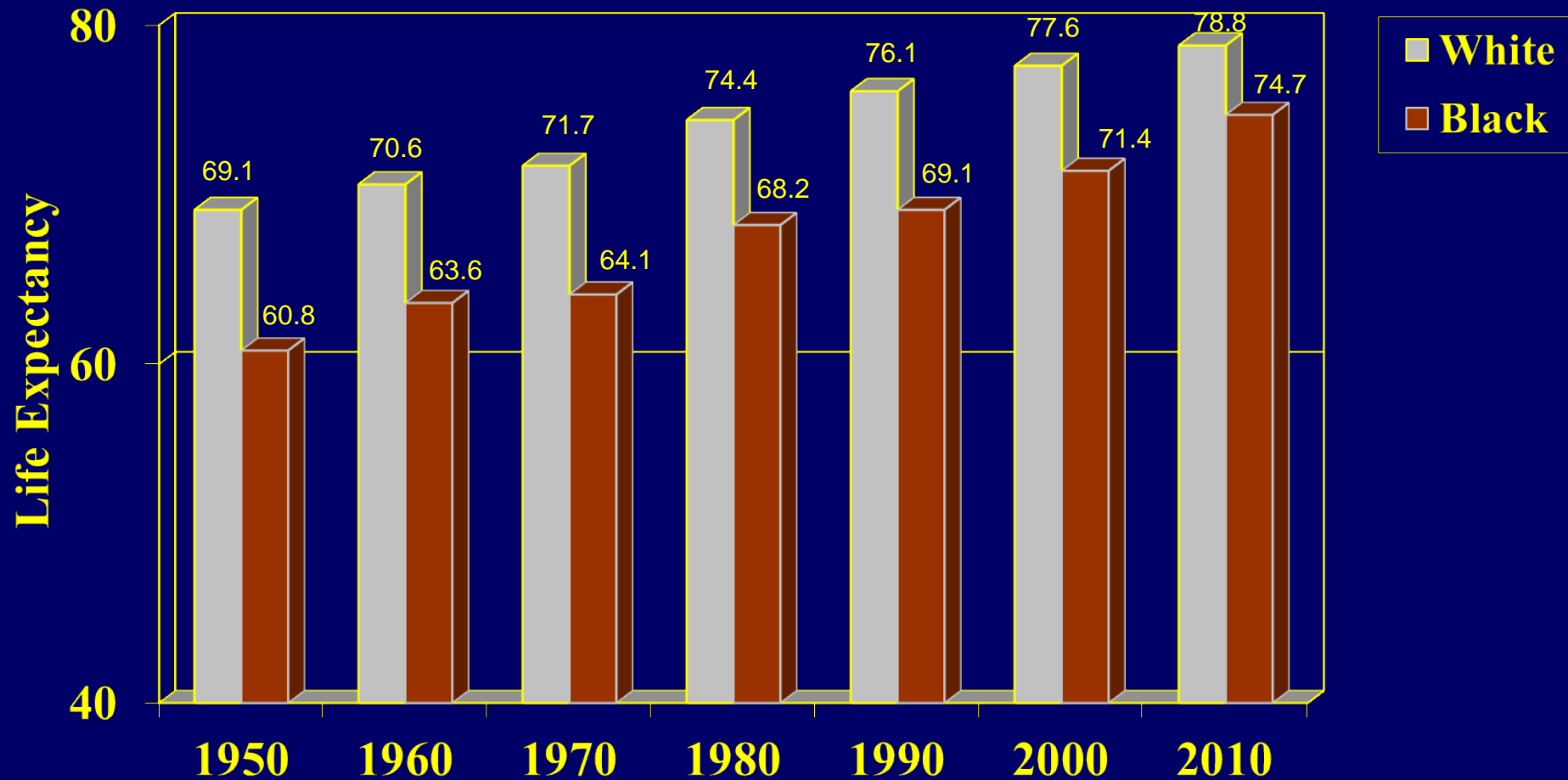
# Life Expectancy, Indigenous Men



Maori, Aboriginal, First Nation, Am Indian & Alaskan Native; Bramley et al. 2004

# Life Expectancy Lags, 1950-2010

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Source: NCHS, Health United States, 2013

# Making Sense of Racial Inequities

# The House that Racism Built

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## **Racism**

- **Ideology of inferiority**
- **Institutional**
- **Cultural**



## **Social Forces**

- **Political**
- **Legal**
- **Economic**
- **Religious**
- **Cultural**
- **Historical Events**

# Racism Defined

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- Racism: an organized system, premised on the categorization and ranking of social groups into races and devalues, disempowers and differentially allocates desirable societal opportunities and resources to racial groups regarded as inferior
- The development of racism is typically undergirded by an ideology of inferiority in which some population groups are regarded as being inferior to others.
- This leads to the development of negative attitudes and beliefs toward racial out-groups (prejudice and stereotypes), and differential treatment of these groups by individuals and social institutions (discrimination)

# *Individual vs Institutional Racism*



# Individual Bias: Waiting at Crosswalks

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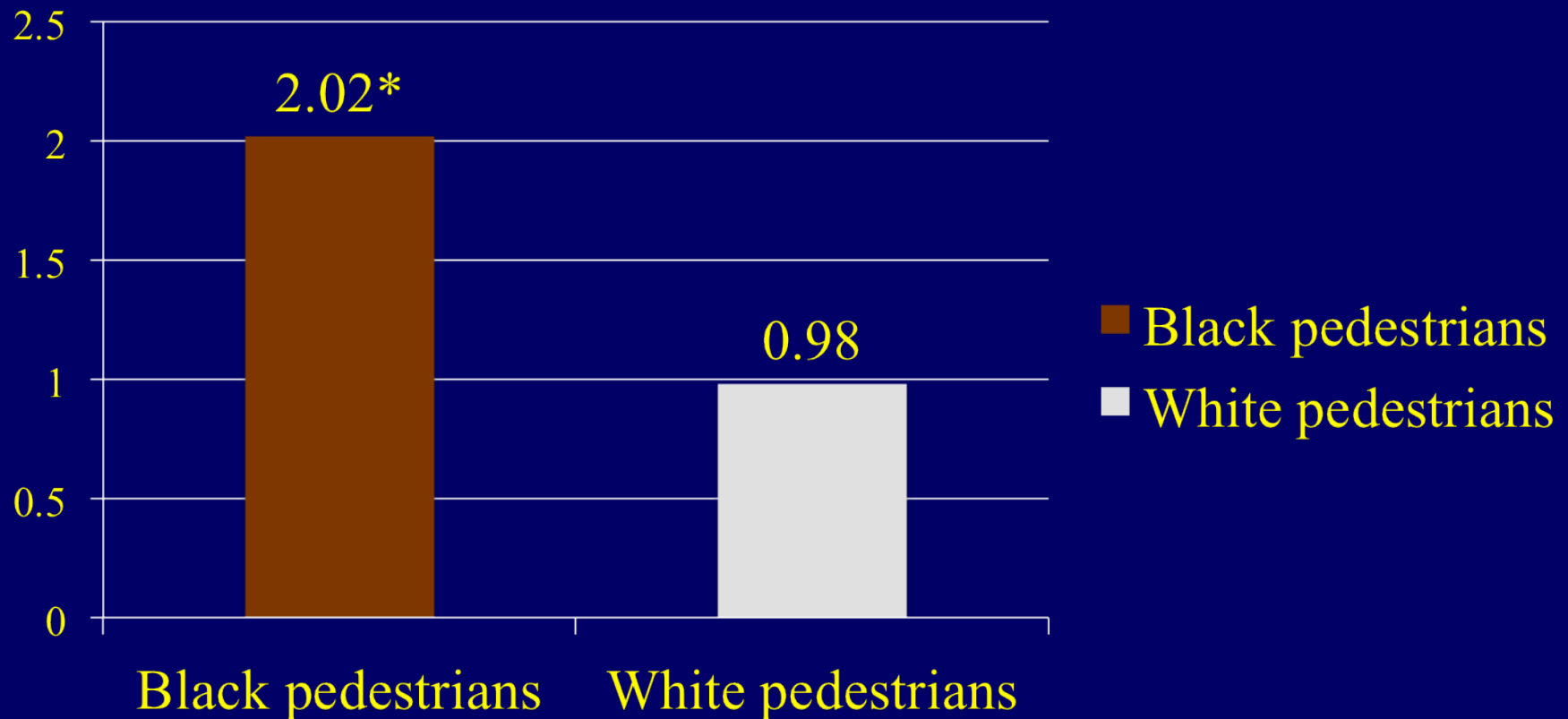
- 3 Black and 3 White males, in Portland, OR
- Males in their 20s, wearing identical clothing
- Male indicates intention to cross



# Drivers Less Likely to Yield for Blacks

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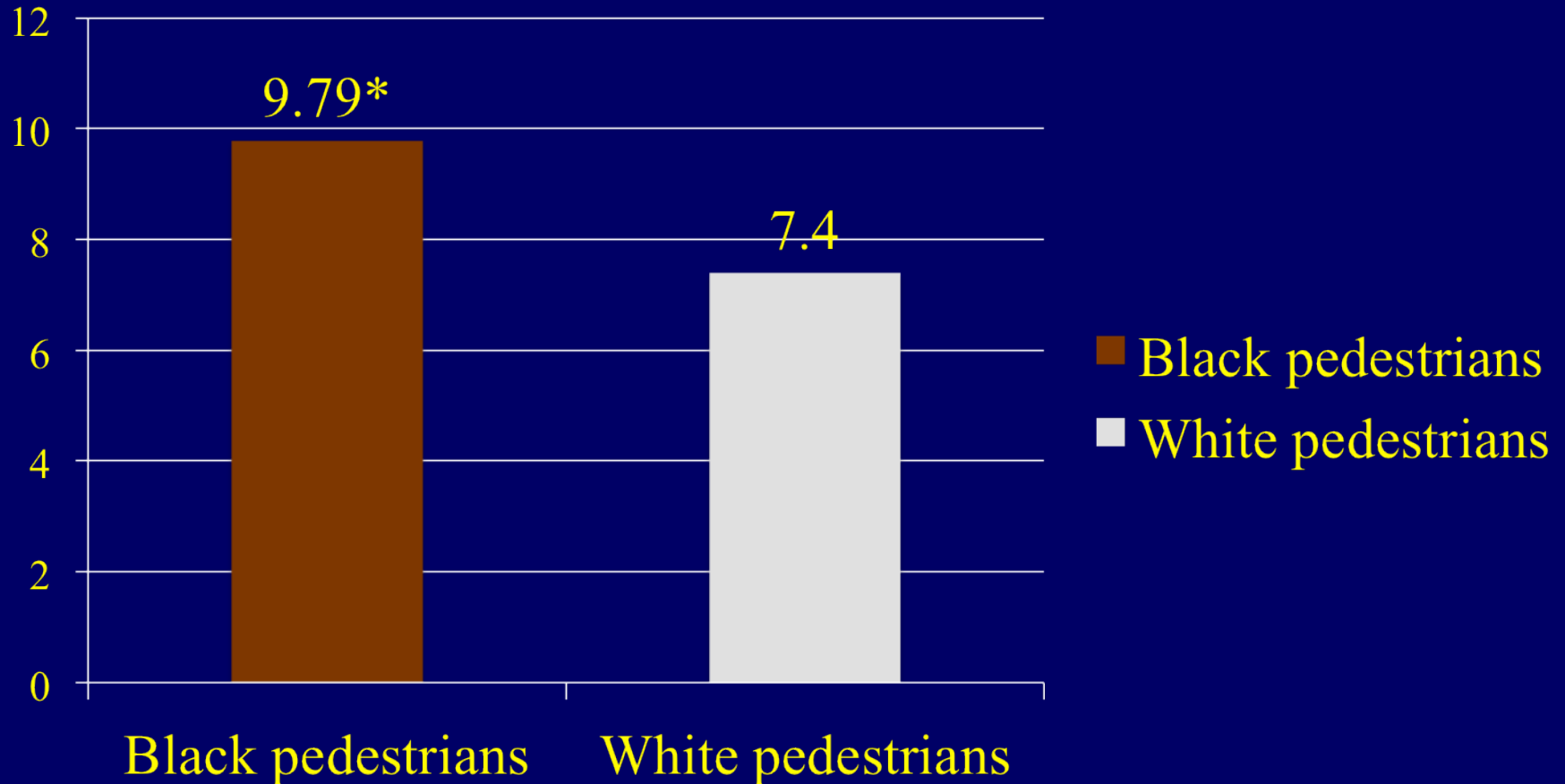
## Average Number of Cars that Passed Without Stopping



# Blacks Wait Longer to Cross the Street

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**Second elapsed until driver yield**



# Institutional Discrimination: Waiting to Vote

Average number of minutes, 2012 Presidential Election

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African Americans  23 min

Latinos  19 min

Asian Americans  15 min

Native Americans  13 min

Whites  12 min

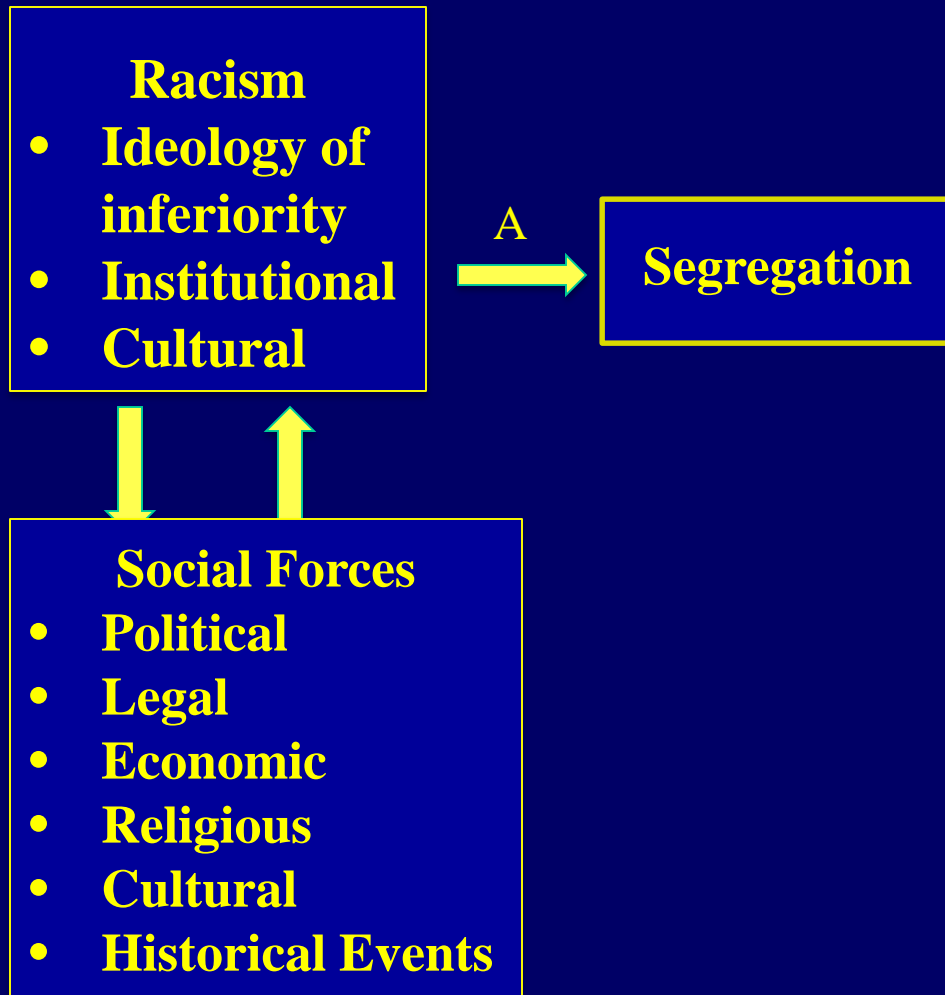
# Institutional Processes

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- Length of time waiting to vote linked to the residence of the voter and the policies and procedures (budgeting and space constraints and local administrative procedures) linked to place:
  - How many voters being served by a polling site?
  - How many precincts in a given area?
  - Staffing of a precinct affects how long it takes to vote
-

# The House that Racism Built

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# Place Matters

Residential Segregation is  
a striking legacy of racism



- As is the forced removal and relocation of indigenous peoples
- The institutionalized isolation and marginalization of racial populations has adversely affected life chances in multiple ways

# Racial Segregation Is ...

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1. ... "basic" to understanding racial inequality in America (Myrdal 1944) .
  2. ... key to understanding racial inequality (Kenneth Clark, 1965) .
  3. ... the "linchpin" of U.S. race relations and the source of the large and growing racial inequality in SES (Kerner Commission, 1968) .
  4. ... "one of the most successful political ideologies" of the last century and "the dominant system of racial regulation and control" in the U.S (John Cell, 1982).
  5. ... "the key structural factor for the perpetuation of Black poverty in the U.S." and the "missing link" in efforts to understand urban poverty (Massey and Denton, 1993).
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# How Segregation Can Affect Health

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1. Segregation determines SES by affecting quality of education and employment opportunities.
2. Segregation can create pathogenic neighborhood and housing conditions.
3. Conditions linked to segregation can constrain the practice of health behaviors and encourage unhealthy ones.
4. Segregation can adversely affect access to medical care and to high-quality care.

# Where you Live Matters

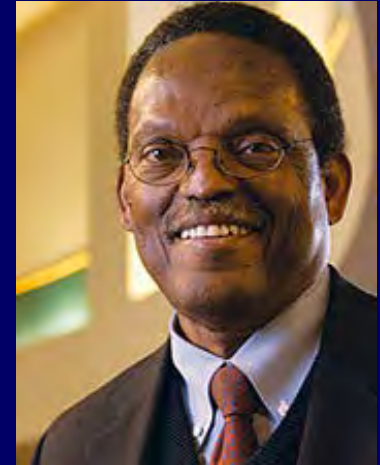


It Matters A LOT for your Health

# Racial Differences in Residential Environment

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In the 171 largest cities in the U.S., there is not even one city where whites live in equal conditions to those of blacks



“The worst urban context in which whites reside is considerably better than the average context of black communities.”



*Segregation Contributes to Large  
Racial/Ethnic Differences in SES*

# Residential Segregation and SES

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A study of the effects of segregation on young African American adults found that the elimination of segregation would erase black-white differences in:

- Earnings
- High School Graduation Rate
- Unemployment

And reduce racial differences in single motherhood by two-thirds

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Cutler, Glaeser & Vigdor, 1997



# Median Household Income and Race, 2013

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Racial Differences in Income are Substantial:

**1 dollar**



**White**

**1.15 dollar**



**Asian**

**70 cents**



**Hispanic**

**62 cents**



**AI/AN**

**59 cents**



**Black**

# Median Wealth and Race, 2011

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For every dollar of wealth that Whites have,



**Asians have 81 cents**



**Blacks have only 6 cents**



**Latinos have only 7 cents**





*-- Large Racial/Ethnic Differences in SES that are consequential for life are not acts of God*

*-- They are not random events – they reflect the successful implementation of social policies, many of which are rooted in racism*



**Socioeconomic Status (SES) is a  
central determinant of the  
distribution of valuable  
resources in society**

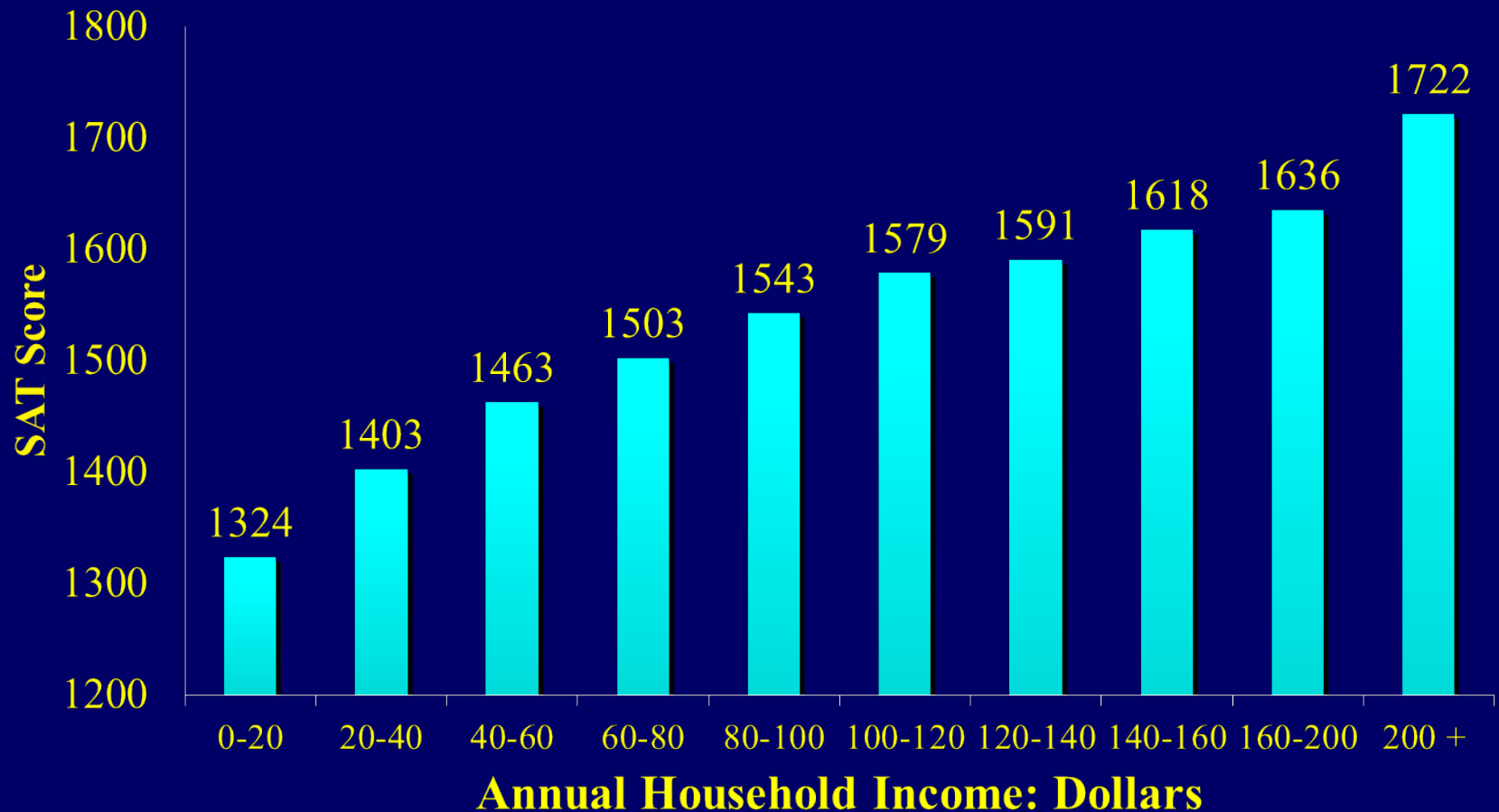
**SAT = Scholastic Aptitude Test**

**OR**  
**Student Affluence Test?**

# SAT SCORE by Family Income

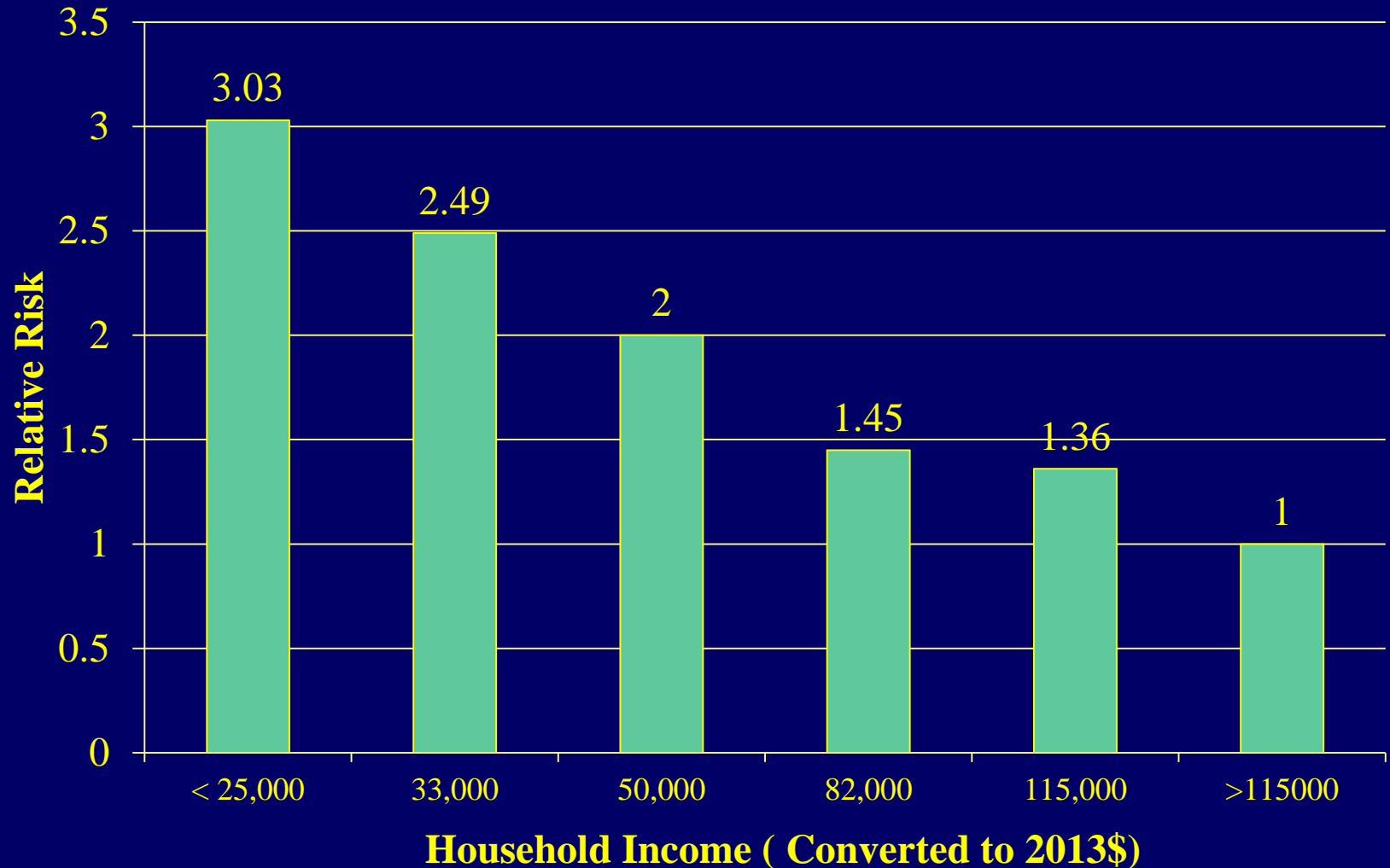
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**SAT Score (Math, Reading & Writing)**



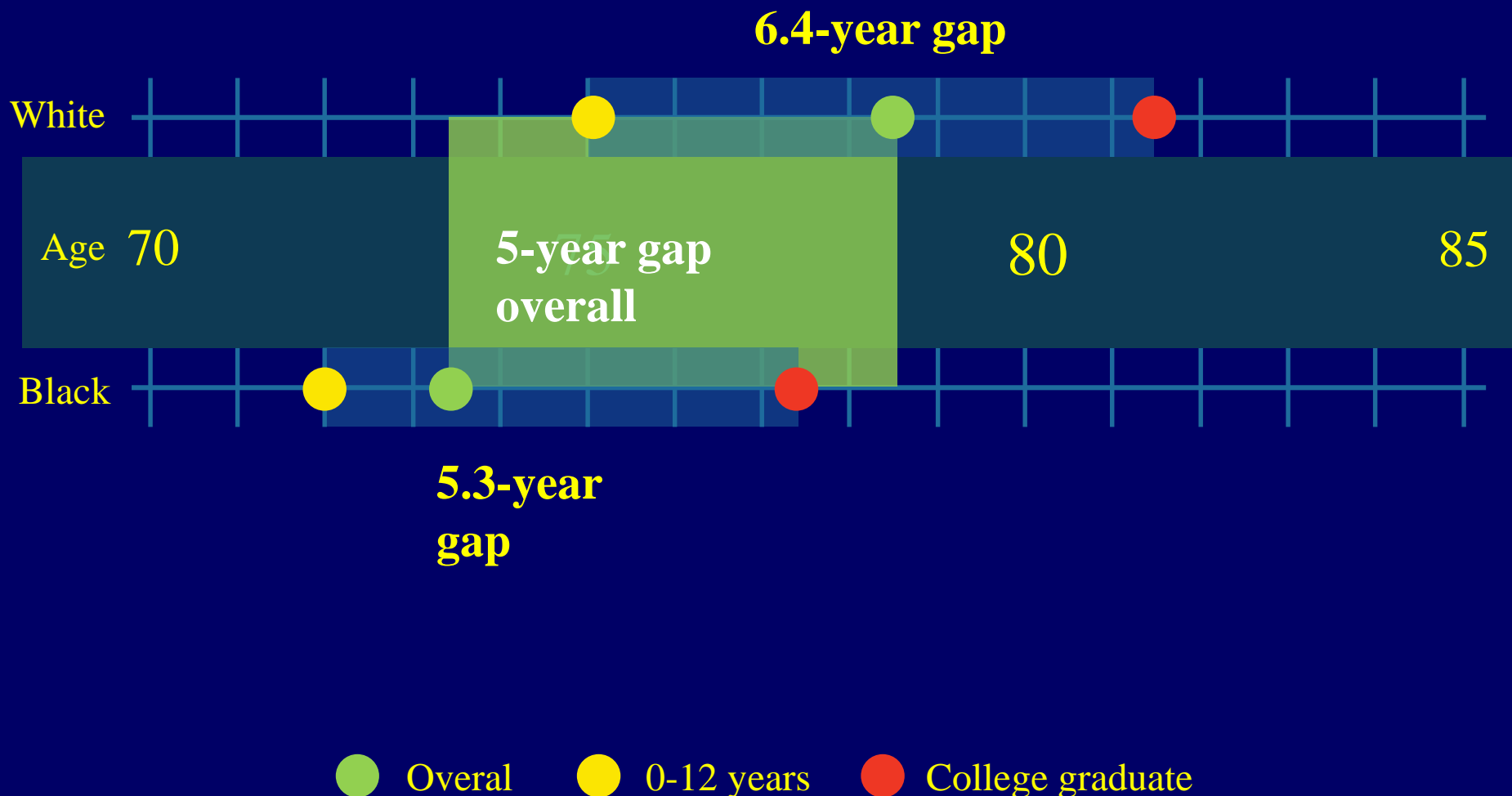
# Relative Risks of All-Cause Mortality by Household Income Level: U.S. Panel Study of Income Dynamics

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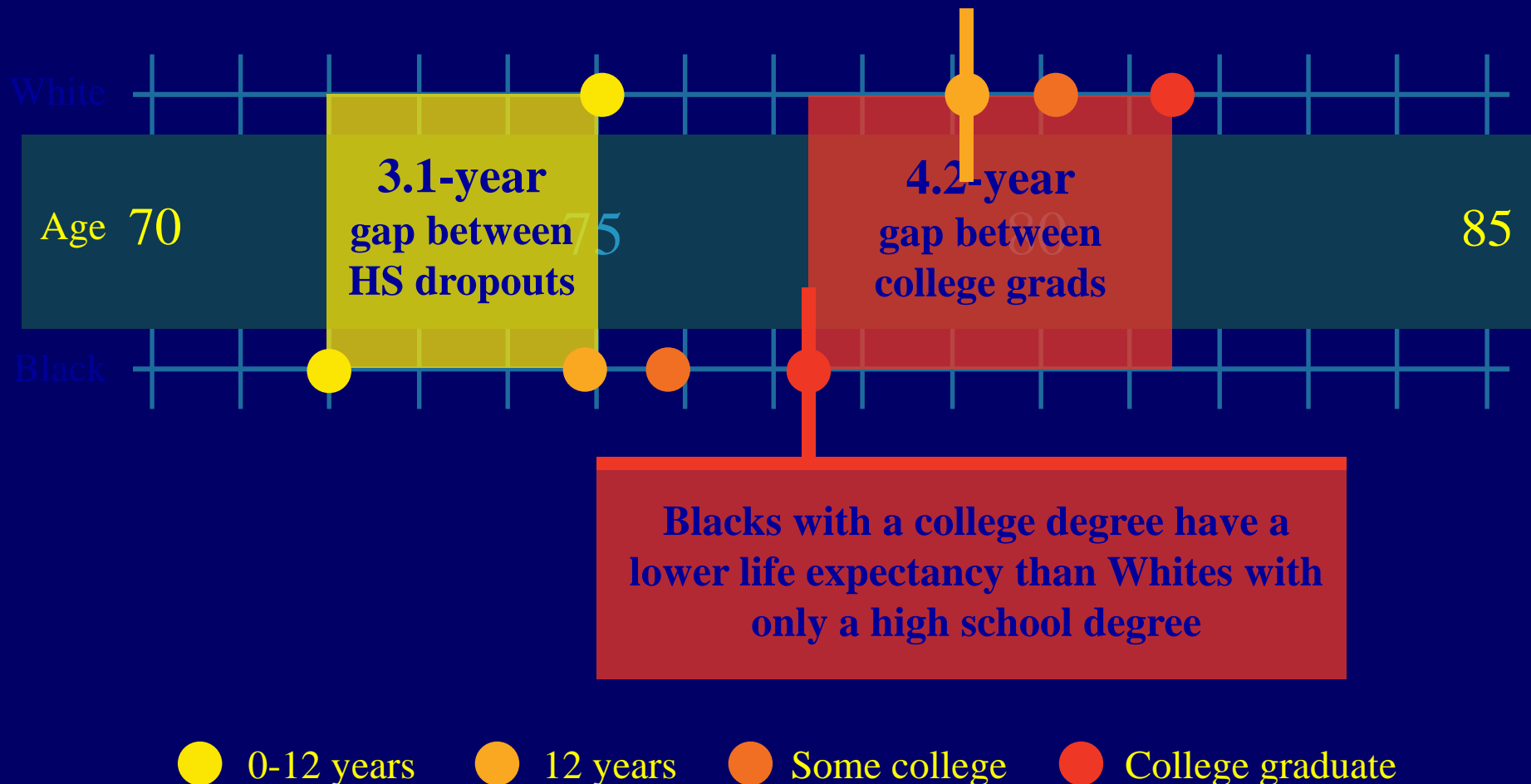
# **Added Burden of Race**

# Life Expectancy at Age 25 Based on Level of Education



# Life Expectancy at Age 25

## Race Still Matters





# Why Does Race Still Matter?

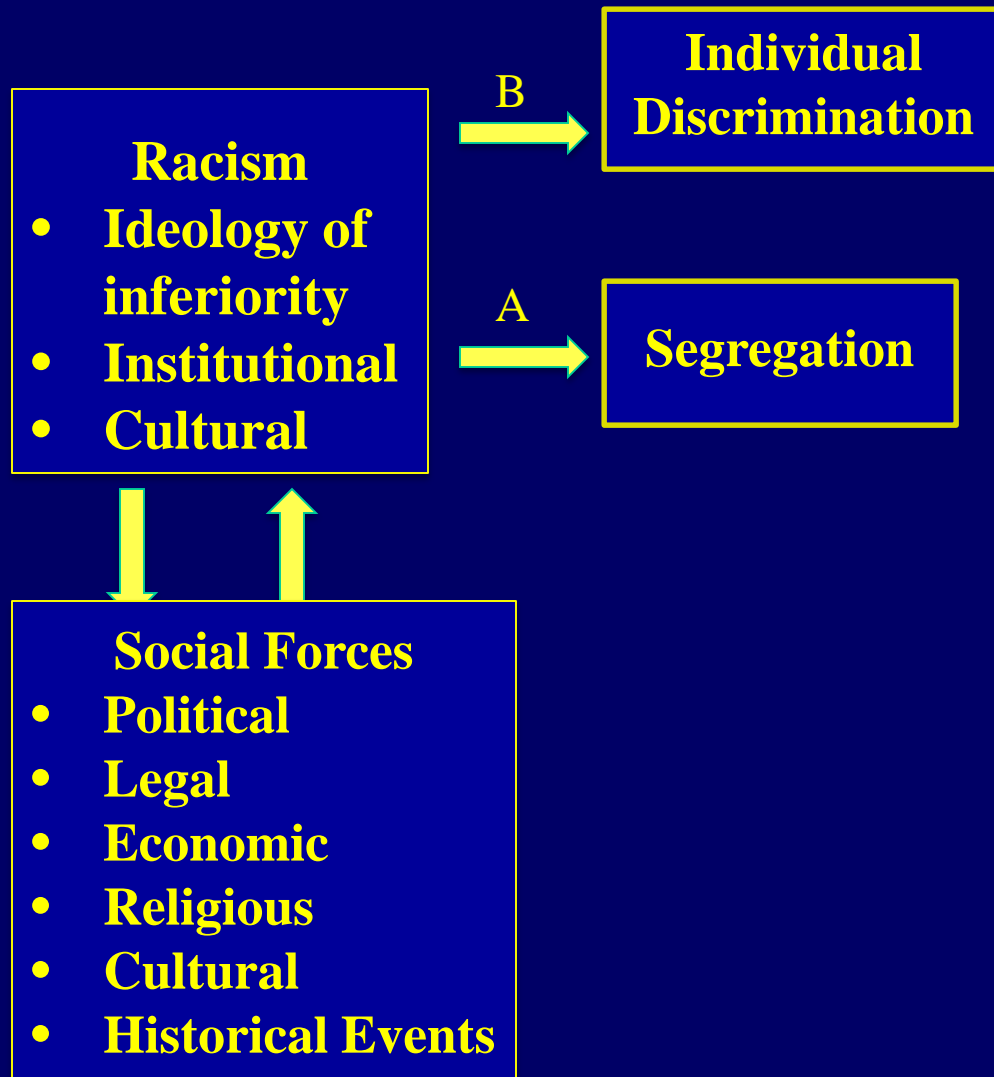
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Could racism be a critical missing piece of the puzzle to understand the patterning of racial disparities in health?

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# The House that Racism Built

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# The Pervasiveness of Discrimination

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# Discrimination

Obtaining bank loans

Getting a job

Getting insurance

Renting an  
apartment

Purchasing  
a car

Pulled over by  
police

Arrested for drug-related crimes

Receiving a promotion

Buying a home

Hailing a taxi

Suspended from  
preschool

Cost of bail

Quality of medical care

**Experiences of discrimination are a  
source of Toxic Stress**

# Every Day Discrimination

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In your day-to-day life how often do these happen to you?

- You are treated with less courtesy than other people.
- You are treated with less respect than other people.
- You receive poorer service than other people at restaurants or stores.
- People act as if they think you are not smart.
- People act as if they are afraid of you.
- People act as if they think you are dishonest.
- People act as if they're better than you are.
- You are called names or insulted.
- You are threatened or harassed.

What do you think was the main reason for these experiences?

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# Discrimination & Health: Tene Lewis

- Everyday Discrimination: positively associated with:
    - coronary artery calcification (Lewis et al., Psy Med, 2006)
    - C-reactive protein (Lewis et al., Brain Beh Immunity, 2010)
    - blood pressure (Lewis et al., J Gerontology: Bio Sci & Med Sci 2009)
    - lower birth weight (Earnshaw et al., Ann Beh Med, 2013)
    - cognitive impairment (Barnes et al., 2012)
    - poor sleep [object. & subject.] (Lewis et al, Hlth Psy, 2012)
    - mortality (Barnes et al., J Gerontology: Bio Sci & Med Sci, 2008).
    - visceral fat (Lewis et al., Am J Epidemiology, 2011)
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# Discrimination and Allostatic Load

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- 331 Blacks (20 year olds), 9 rural counties in Georgia
- Discrimination assessed at age 16, 17, and 18
- Allostatic load assessed at age 20; overnight cortisol, epinephrine, norepinephrine, SBP, DBP, CRP, BMI
- 79% of sample had low and increasing levels of discrimination; 22% had stably high levels
- Stably high levels of discrimination as a teen linked to higher allostatic load at age 20
- Association increased when adjusted for CES-D, life stress, socioeconomic risk and unhealthy behavior.

*Discrimination in the larger environment*



# Arab American Birth Outcomes

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- Non race-related stressors can be racialized in ways that can generate racial/ethnic discrimination
  - September 11 terrorist attacks an example
  - Well-documented increase in discrimination and harassment of Arab Americans after 9/11/2001
  - Arab American women in California had an increased risk of low birthweight and preterm birth in the 6 months after Sept. 11 compared to pre-Sept. 11
  - Other women in California had no change in birth outcome risk, pre-and post-September 11
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# The Trump Effect

- Survey of 2,000 K-12 teachers (not a probability sample)
- Since the 2016 presidential campaign began:
  - 67% of teachers report that students (esp., immigrants, children of immigrants and Muslims) express concerns or fears about what might happen to their family after the election
  - 50%+ report increase in uncivil political discourse
  - More than a third seen increase in anti-Muslim or anti-immigrant sentiment
  - 50%+ say students “emboldened” to use slurs and in name-calling, and say bigoted and hostile things about minorities, immigrants, and Muslims

# Fear

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“My students are terrified of Donald Trump; they think that if he is elected, all black people will get sent back to Africa”

--Middle School Teacher with a large population of African American Muslims

# Students in Tears

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My students are “crying in the classroom  
and having meltdowns at home”

-- Elementary school teacher, Virginia

# Worried About the Wall

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“Is the wall here yet?”

The question that a Latino child in kindergarten asks his teacher every day.

(He was told by classmates that he will be deported and trapped behind a wall)

-- Kindergarten teacher, Tennessee

# Concerned About Safety

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“My black students are “concerned for their safety because of what they see on TV at Trump rallies”

-- K-3 Teacher, Oregon

# Taking Precautions

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I have “Latino students who carry their birth certificates and social security cards to school because they are afraid they will be deported”

-- High School Teacher, North Carolina

# America's Children Today

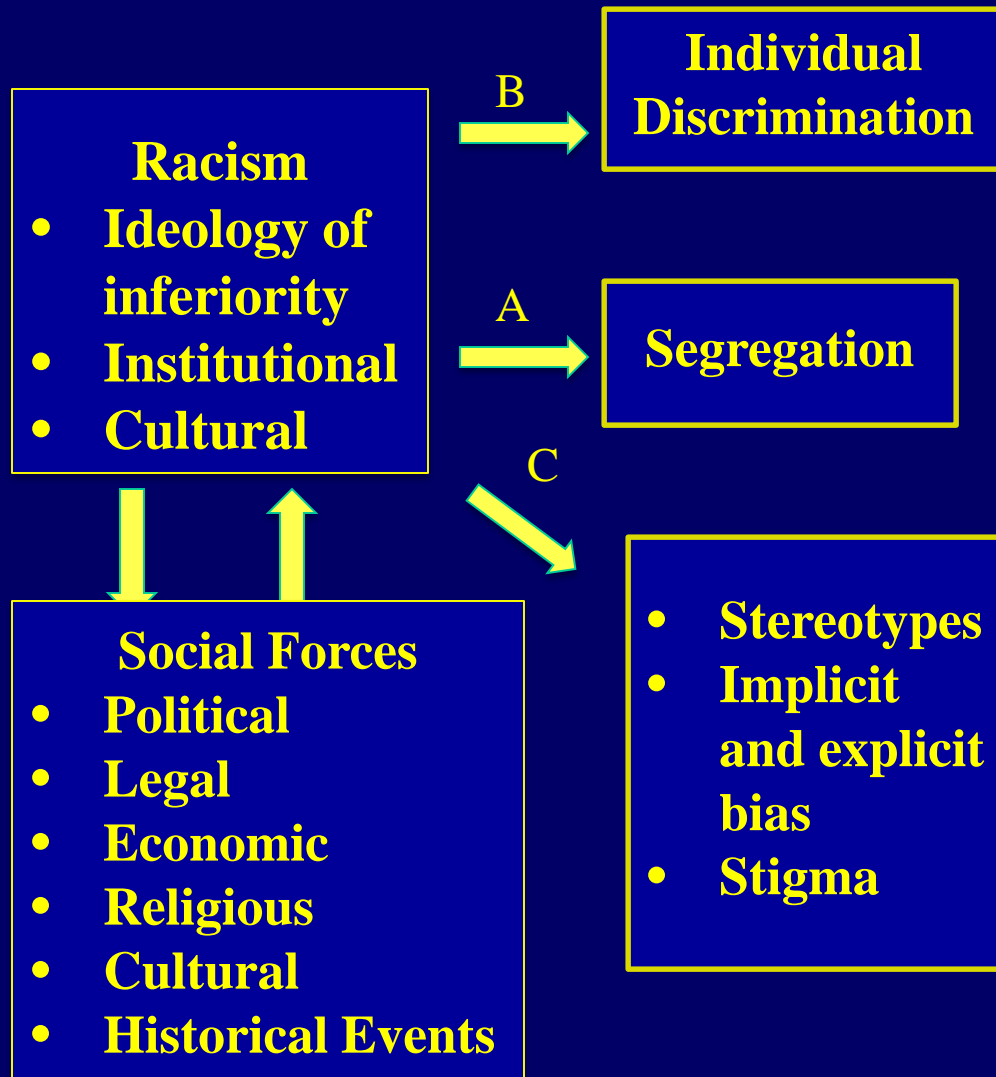
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- In 2016 almost 1 in 3 U.S. students are children of immigrants
- They are scared, stressed and need support and assurance from teachers
- Muslim children are harassed and worried
- Some native born black children whose ancestors have been in the U.S. for centuries are scared about being sent back to Africa
- Many young students have nightmares about a return to slavery, being rounded up and put in camps



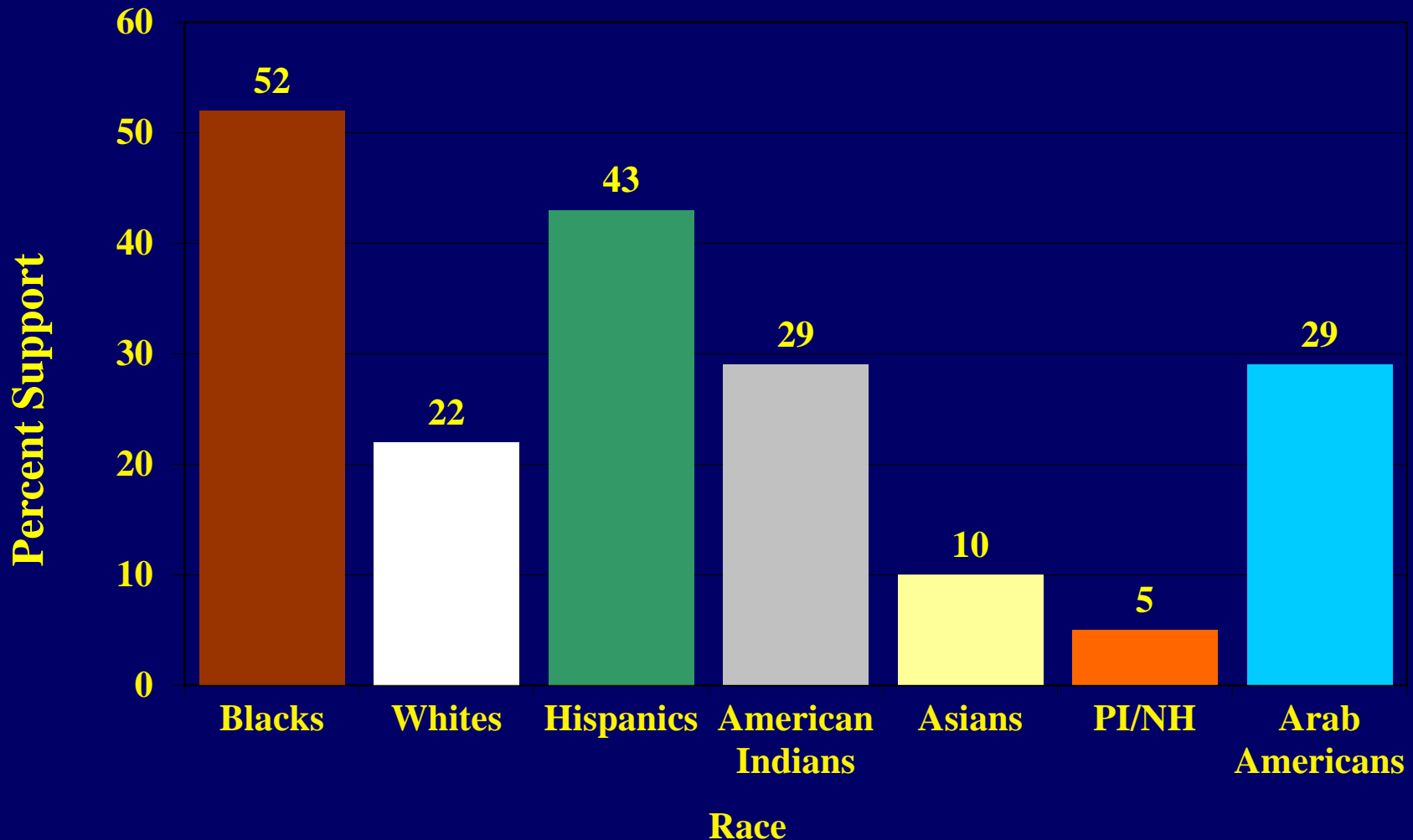
# The House that Racism Built

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# Percent of Whites\* Viewing Group as Violence Prone, 2013

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*Where do Negative Racial Stereotypes  
come from?*

# Racial Stereotypes in Our Culture

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- BEAGLE Project
- 10 million words
- Sample of books, newspapers, magazine articles, etc. that average college-level student would read in lifetime
- Allows us to assess how often Americans have seen or heard words paired together over their lifetime

# Stereotypes in Our Culture

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BLACK	poor	.64	WHITE	wealthy	.48
BLACK	violent	.43	WHITE	progressive	.41
BLACK	religious	.42	WHITE	conventional	.37
BLACK	lazy	.40	WHITE	stubborn	.32
BLACK	cheerful	.40	WHITE	successful	.30
BLACK	dangerous	.33	WHITE	educated	.30
FEMALE	distant	.37	MALE	dominant	.46
FEMALE	warm	.35	MALE	leader	.31
FEMALE	gentle	.34	MALE	logical	.31
FEMALE	passive	.34	MALE	strong	.31

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# Stereotypes in Our Culture

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BLACK	cheerful	.40	WHITE	successful	.30
BLACK	dangerous	.33	WHITE	educated	.30
BLACK	charming	.28	WHITE	ethical	.28
BLACK	merry	.28	WHITE	greedy	.22
BLACK	ignorant	.27	WHITE	sheltered	.21
BLACK	musical	.26	WHITE	selfish	.20

Negative stereotypes about race remain  
deeply embedded in our culture

Negative Stereotypes Trigger Racial  
Discrimination



# UNEQUAL TREATMENT

CONFRONTING RACIAL AND ETHNIC  
DISPARITIES IN HEALTH CARE

INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE

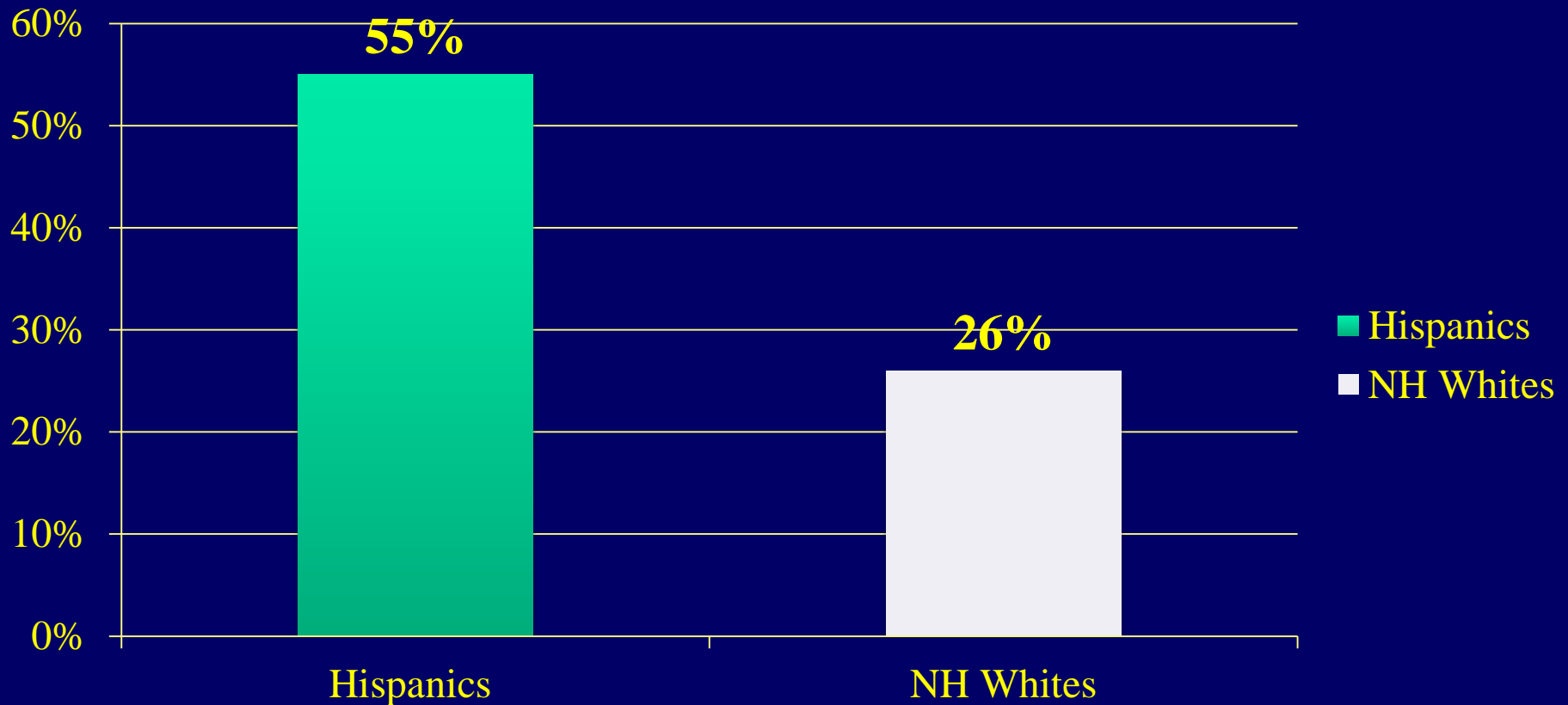
## Racial Bias in Medical Care



# Ethnicity and Pain Medicine

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**Percent of Patients with broken bone receiving no analgesia**



# **Disparities in the Clinical Encounter: The Core Paradox**

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**How could well-meaning and highly educated health professionals, working in their usual circumstances with diverse populations of patients, create a pattern of care that appears to be discriminatory?**

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# **Unconscious Discrimination**

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- **When one holds a negative stereotype about a group and meets someone who fits the stereotype s/he will discriminate against that individual**
  - **Stereotype-linked bias is an**
    - **Automatic process**
    - **Unconscious process**
  - **It occurs even among persons who are not prejudiced**
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# Preschool Suspensions

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- Disproportionate rates of early childhood expulsions for boys, Blacks, and particularly Black boys
- Compared to White preschoolers, Blacks are 3.6 times as likely to receive one or more suspensions
- Black children make up 19% of preschoolers, but are 47% of preschoolers suspended one or more times
- Boys are three times as likely as girls to be suspended one or more times.

# Bias in Preschool?

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- At a conference, 135 pre-K teachers watch 12 short videos and asked to detect challenging behavior in classroom *“Sometimes this involves seeing behavior before it becomes problematic...Some clips may or may not contain challenging behavior”*
- 4 children in each video



# Bias in Pre-School!

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- Participants to identify the child who would require the most attention
- Eye-tracking data identifies how much time spent gazing at each child
- Teachers focus more on black children
- Teachers spent more time gazing at black boys than any other children
- Pattern true for Black and White teachers
- When asked which children required most attention, 42% indicated the black boy (68% more than expected by chance alone)

# Faster than the Twinkling of an Eye!

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- Studies find that most Americans have rapid and unconscious emotional and neural reactions to blacks
- A millisecond is 1/1000 of a second
- 100 milliseconds - how quickly an individual's race is noticed and whether or not that person is trustworthy
- 300 - 400 milliseconds: time for human eye to blink
- 800 milliseconds: human resting heart cycle time

## Reducing Racial Bias Among Health Care Providers: Lessons from Social-Cognitive Psychology

*Diana Burgess, PhD<sup>1,2</sup>, Michelle van Ryn, PhD, MPH<sup>1,3</sup>, John Dovidio, PhD<sup>4</sup>,  
and Somnath Saha, MD, MPH<sup>5</sup>*



# The Devine Solution

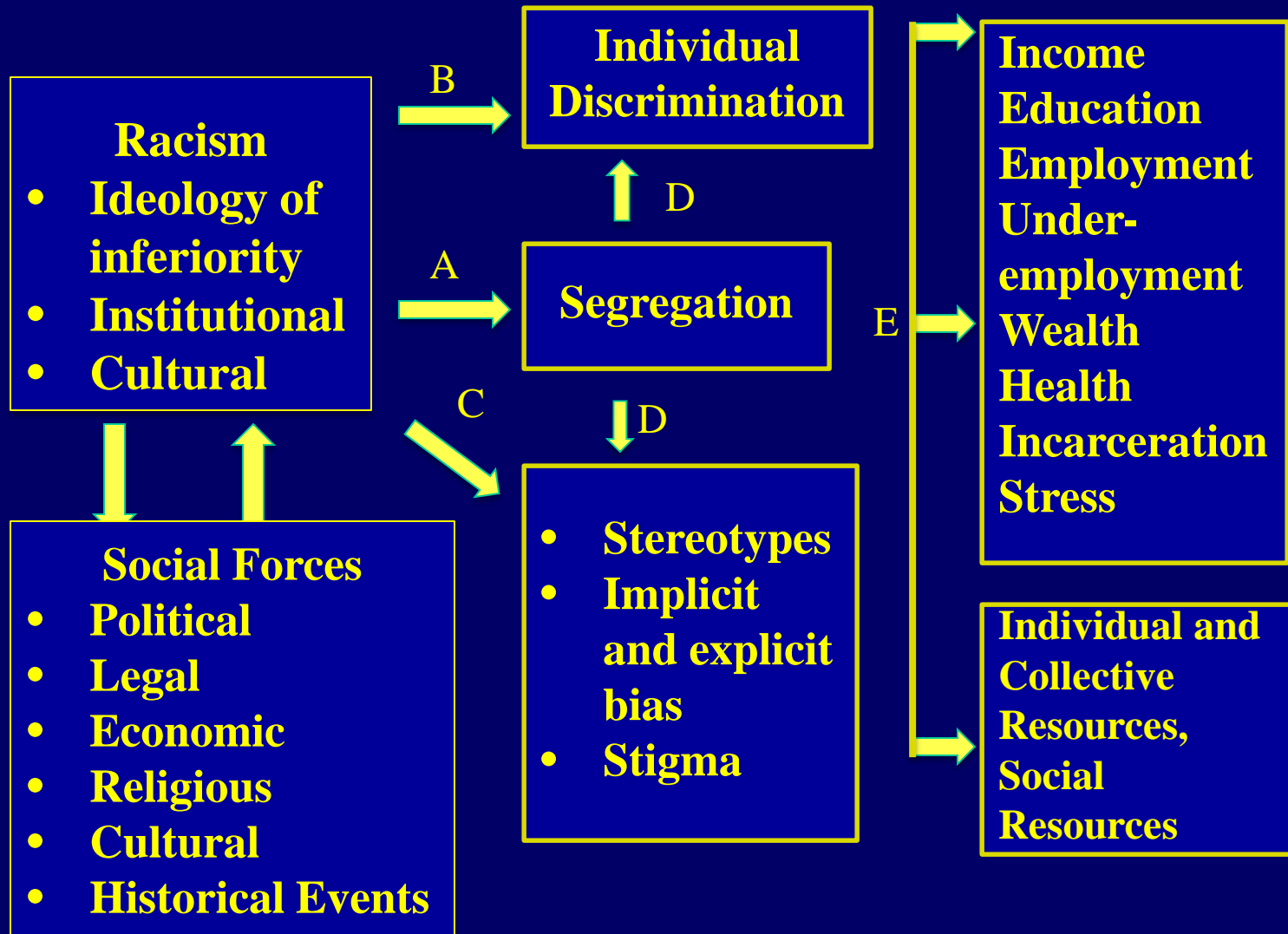
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- Non-black adults can be motivated to increase their awareness of bias against blacks, their concerns about the effects of bias and to implement strategies which were effective in producing substantial reductions in bias that remained evident three months later
- Implicit biases viewed as deeply engrained habits that can be replaced by learning new prejudice-reducing strategies including stereotype replacement, counter-stereotype imaging, individuation, perspective taking and increasing opportunities for interracial contact.

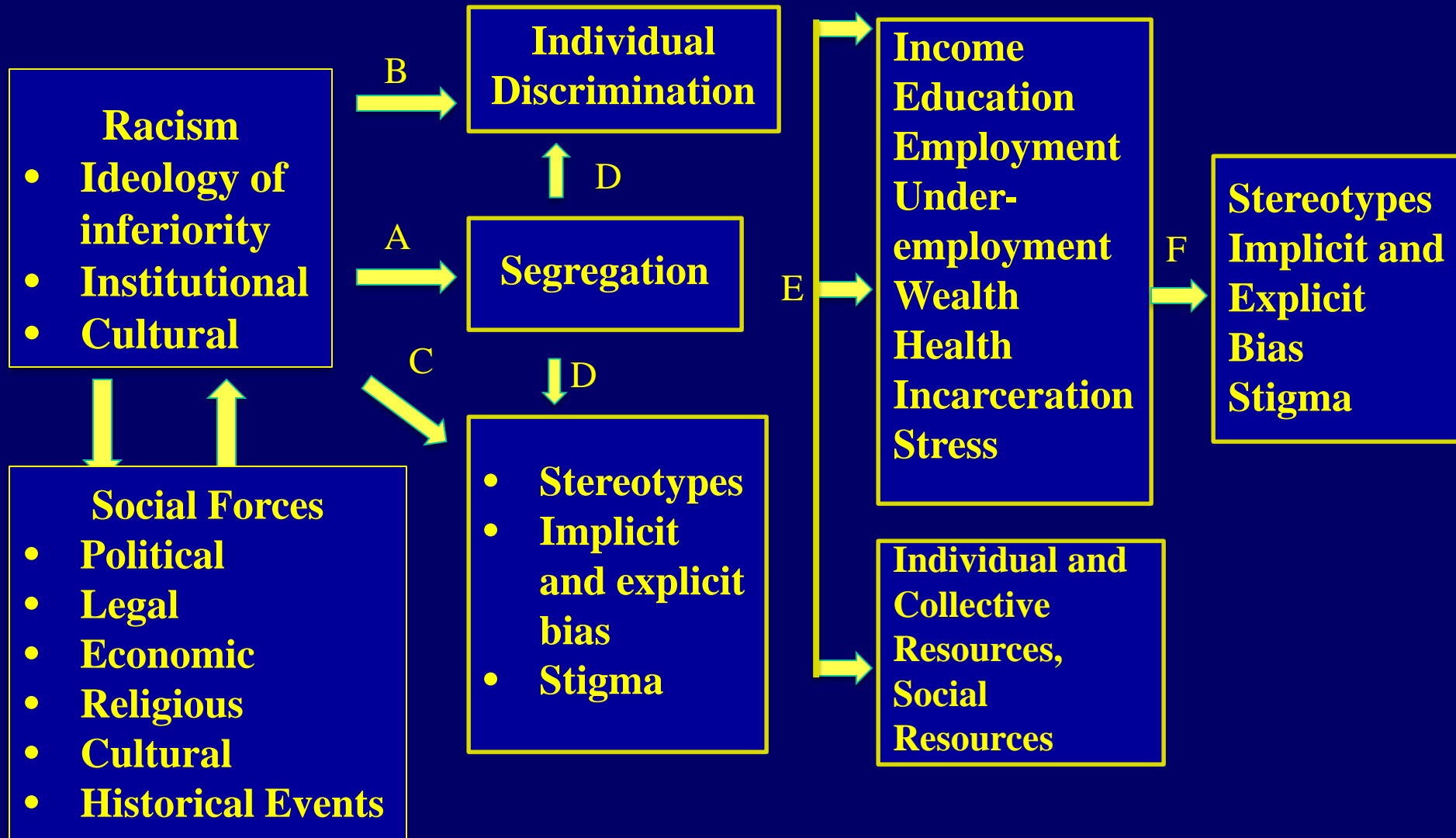
# Internalized Racism:

Acceptance of society's negative characterization  
can adversely affect health

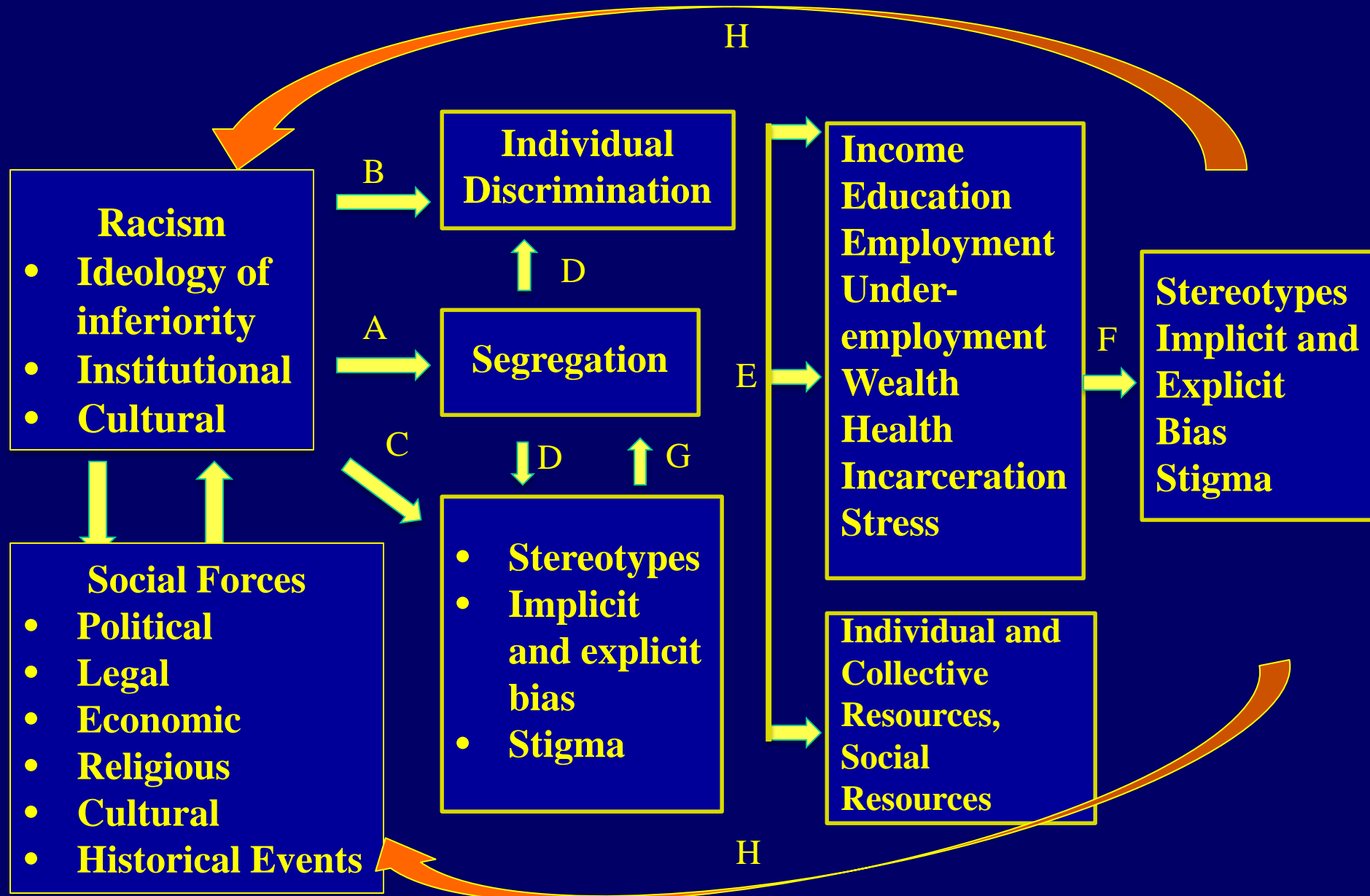
# The House that Racism Built



# The House that Racism Built



# The House that Racism Built



# Undoing Racism

Dismantling Institutional Racism

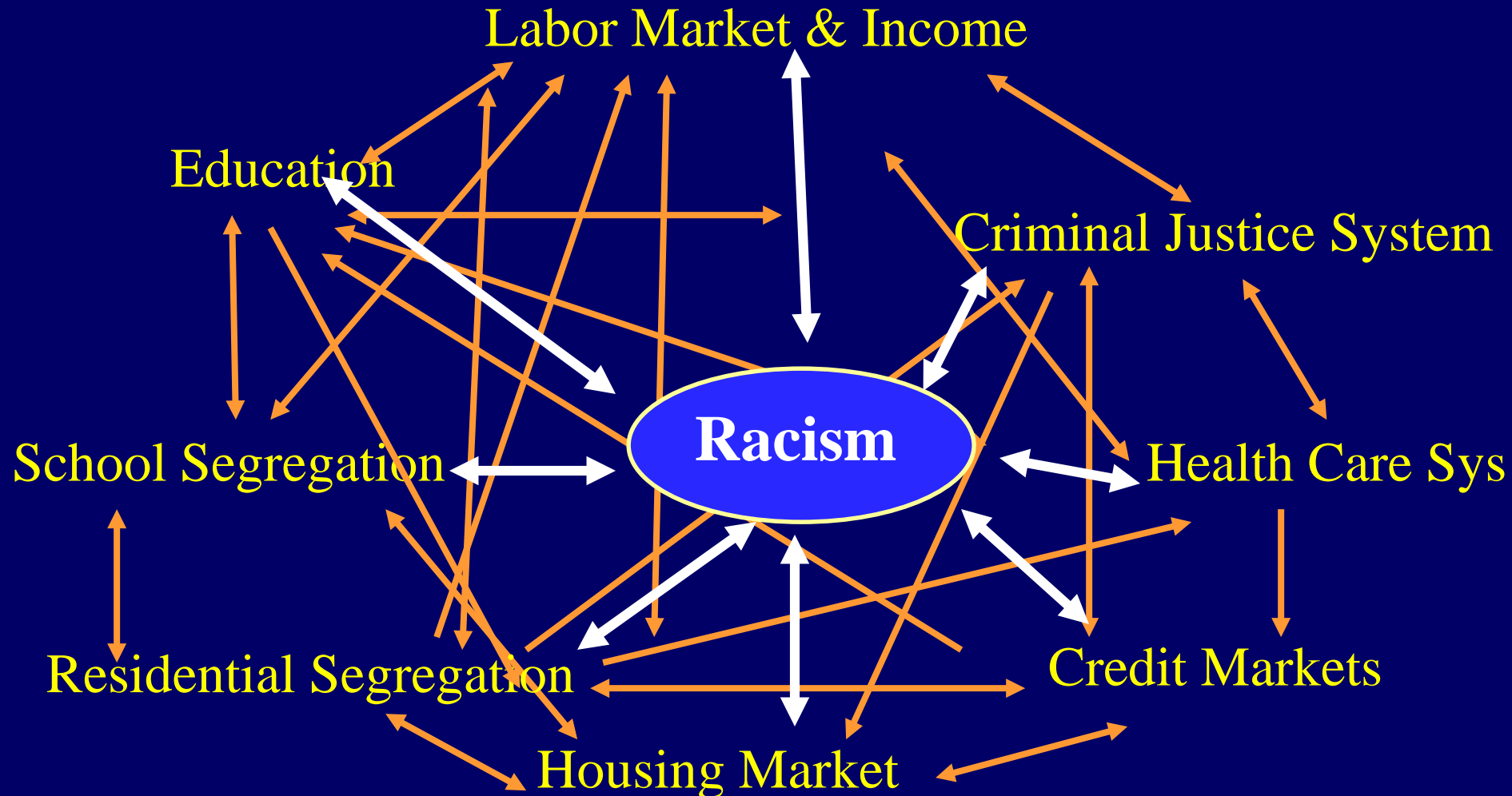
# Racism as a System: Implications

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- Disparities in one societal domain are not independent of those in other domains
- Racism is a set of dynamically related components of subsystems.
- There is reciprocal causality of disparities across domains
- Disparities in one domain are a product of causal processes across multiple subsystems
- “It is impossible” to come up with remedies for disparities if we fail to acknowledge and address the interdependence across domains

# Racism as a System

Arrows reflect emergence of racism and the effects of subsystems (white arrows)





# Options for Reducing Racial Inequalities

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- 1 An exogenous force that acts on every subsystem: authoritative entity with mandate to act
- 2 Act on leverage points
  - Residential segregation is one
- 3 Removing institutions from the discrimination system
  - Success of the Army
- 4 Increasing accountability, reducing discretion

*Effective solutions to reducing racism must be comprehensive*

# Improving America's Health

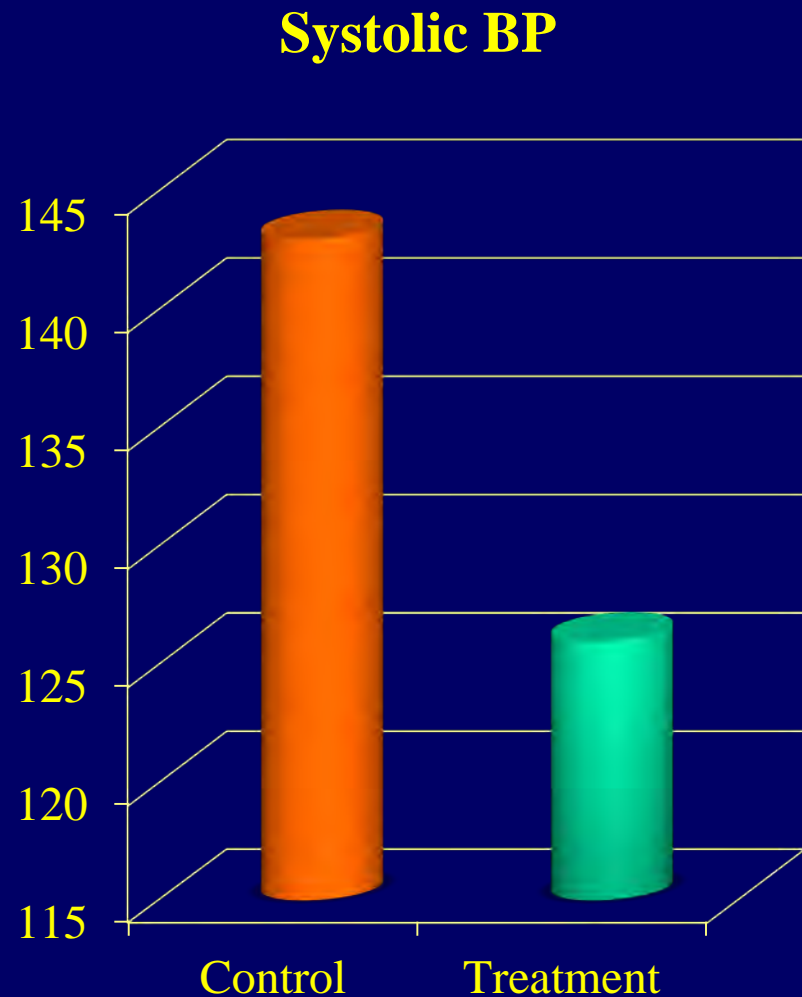
## Start Early

# Carolina Abecedarian Project (ABC)

- 1972-77, economically disadvantaged children, birth to age 5, randomized to early childhood program
- Program offered a safe and nurturing environment, good nutrition and pediatric care
- At age 21, fewer symptoms of depression, lower marijuana use, more active lifestyle, & educational & vocational assets benefits
- In mid-30's, lower levels of multiple risk factors for CVD and metabolic disease. Effects stronger for males

# Carolina Abecedarian Project (ABC)

- Example: systolic BP  
143 mm Hg in male  
controls vs. 126mm Hg  
in the treatment group
- One in 4 males in  
control group met  
criteria for metabolic  
syndrome compared to  
none in the treatment  
group
- Lower BMI at zero to 5  
yrs equals a lower BMI  
in their 30s



# Improving America's Health

## Comprehensive Approaches

# Purpose Built Communities: Comprehensive

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- Based on efforts in Atlanta's East Lake district
  - Purpose Built Communities uses integrative strategies including cradle-to-college educational opportunities, mixed-income housing, early child development programs, employment support and recreational opportunities
  - Community engagement and philanthropy
  - **Key:** addressing all of the challenges faced by disadvantaged communities simultaneously
  - Purpose Built Communities in Atlanta, New Orleans, Indianapolis, Charlotte, among others
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Improving America's Health

Addressing Economic Well-being

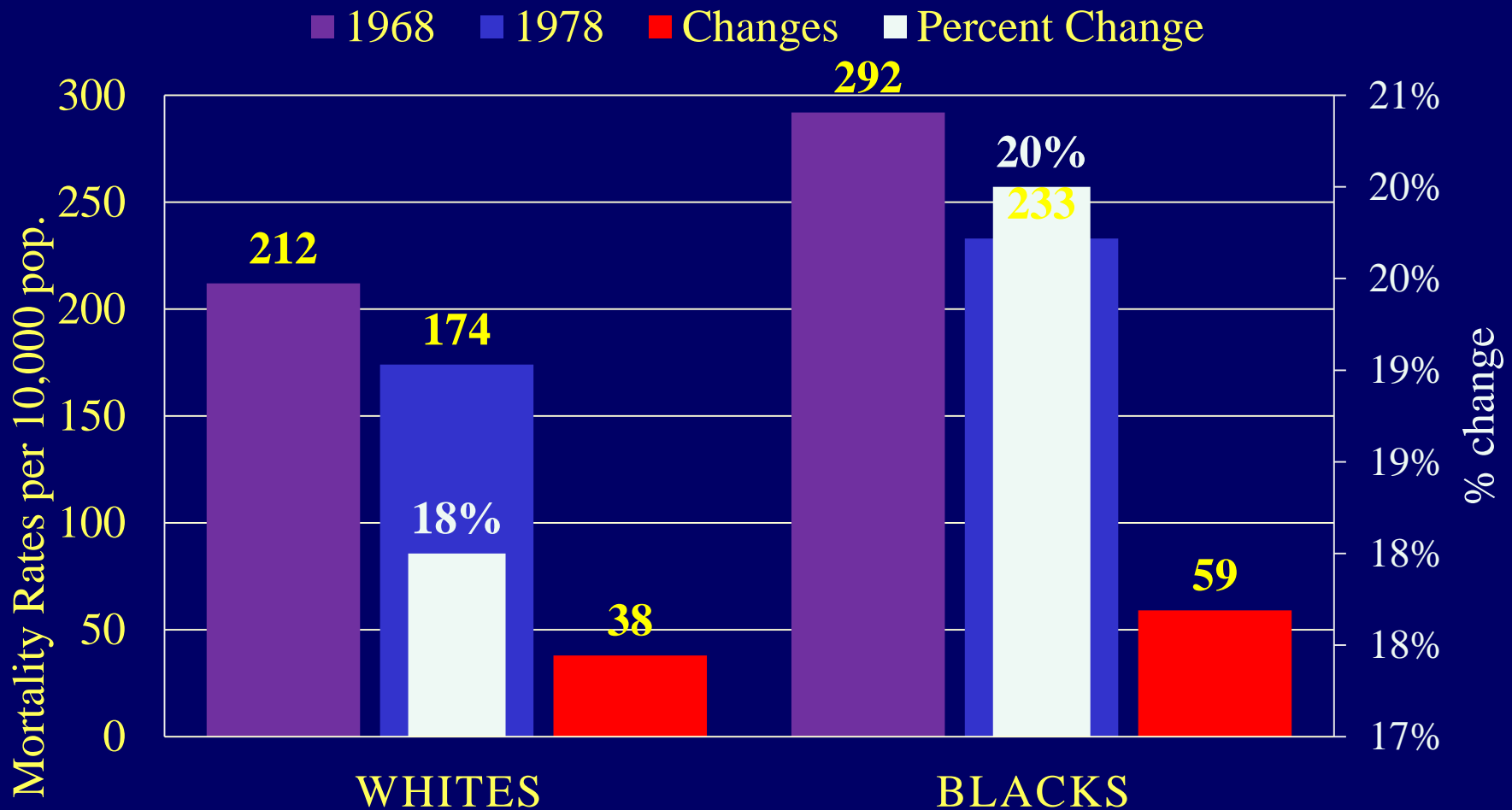
# Economic Policy is Health Policy

In the last 60 years, black-white differences in health have narrowed and widened with black-white differences in income



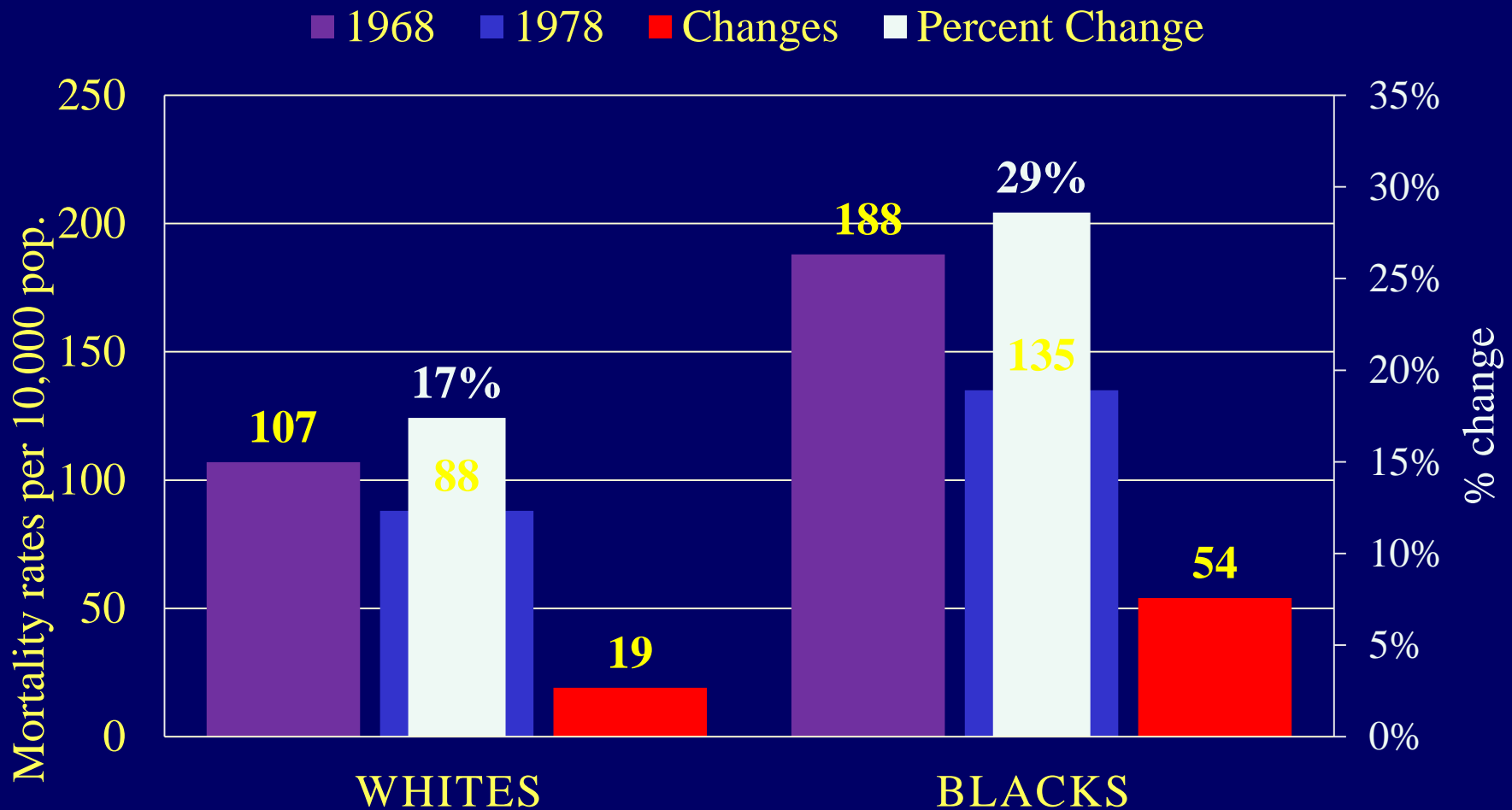
# Mortality Changes, Men, 1968 to 1978

## Ages 35 to 74



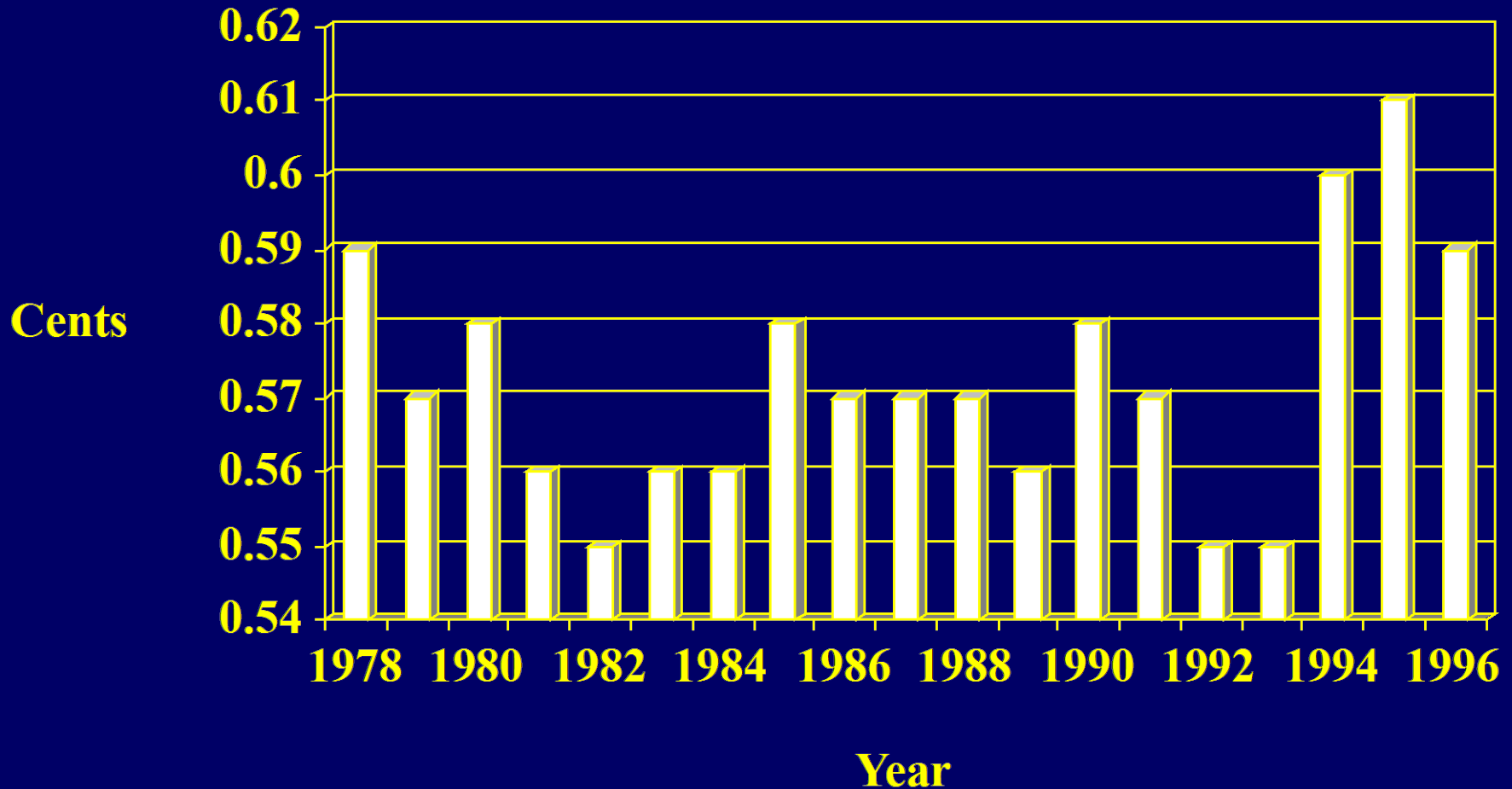
# Mortality Changes, Women, 1968 to 1978

## Ages 35 to 74



# Median Family Income of Blacks per \$1 of Whites

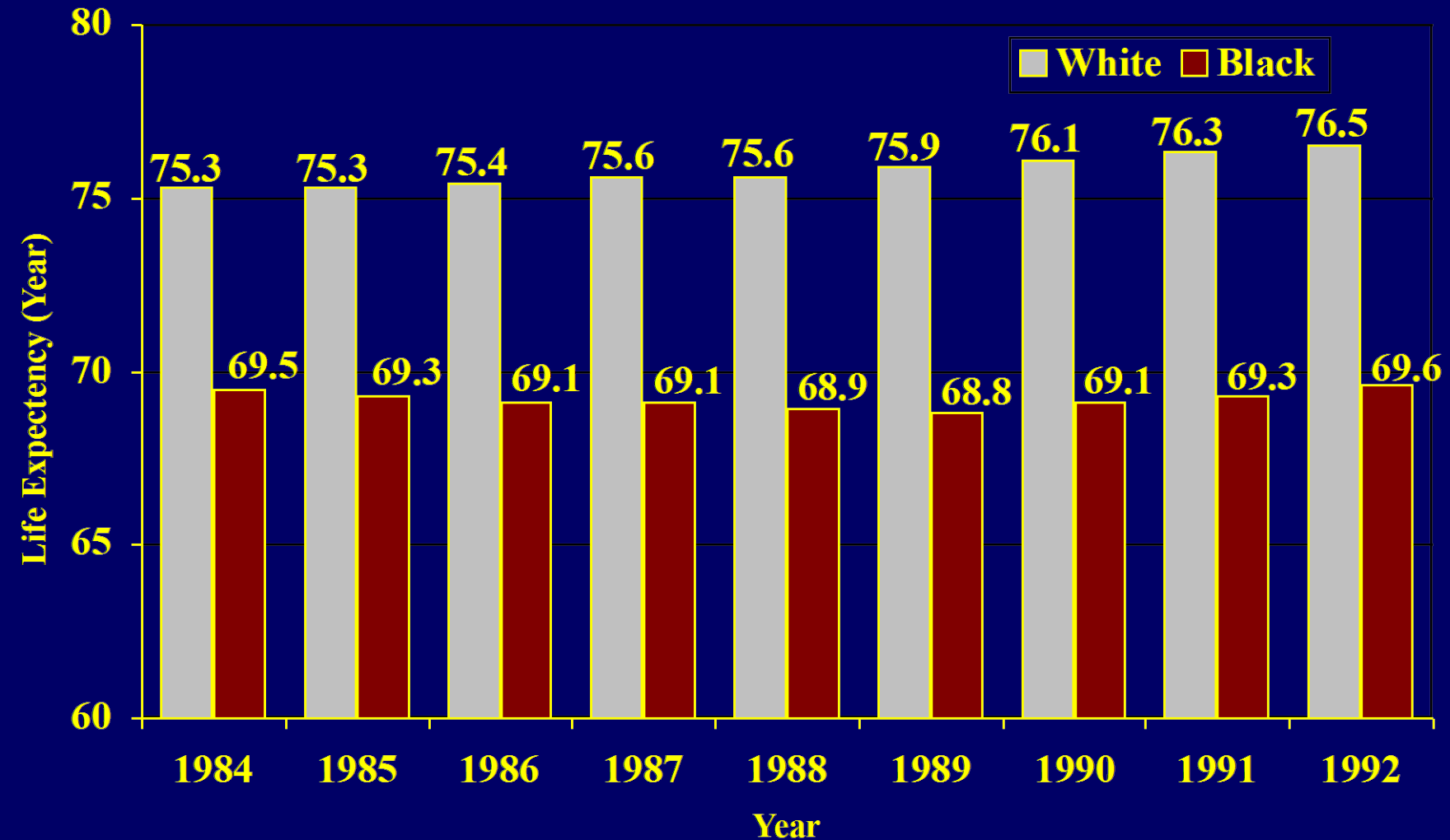
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Source: Economic Report of the President, 1998

# U.S. Life Expectancy at Birth, 1984-1992



# Improving America's Health

## Undoing Racism

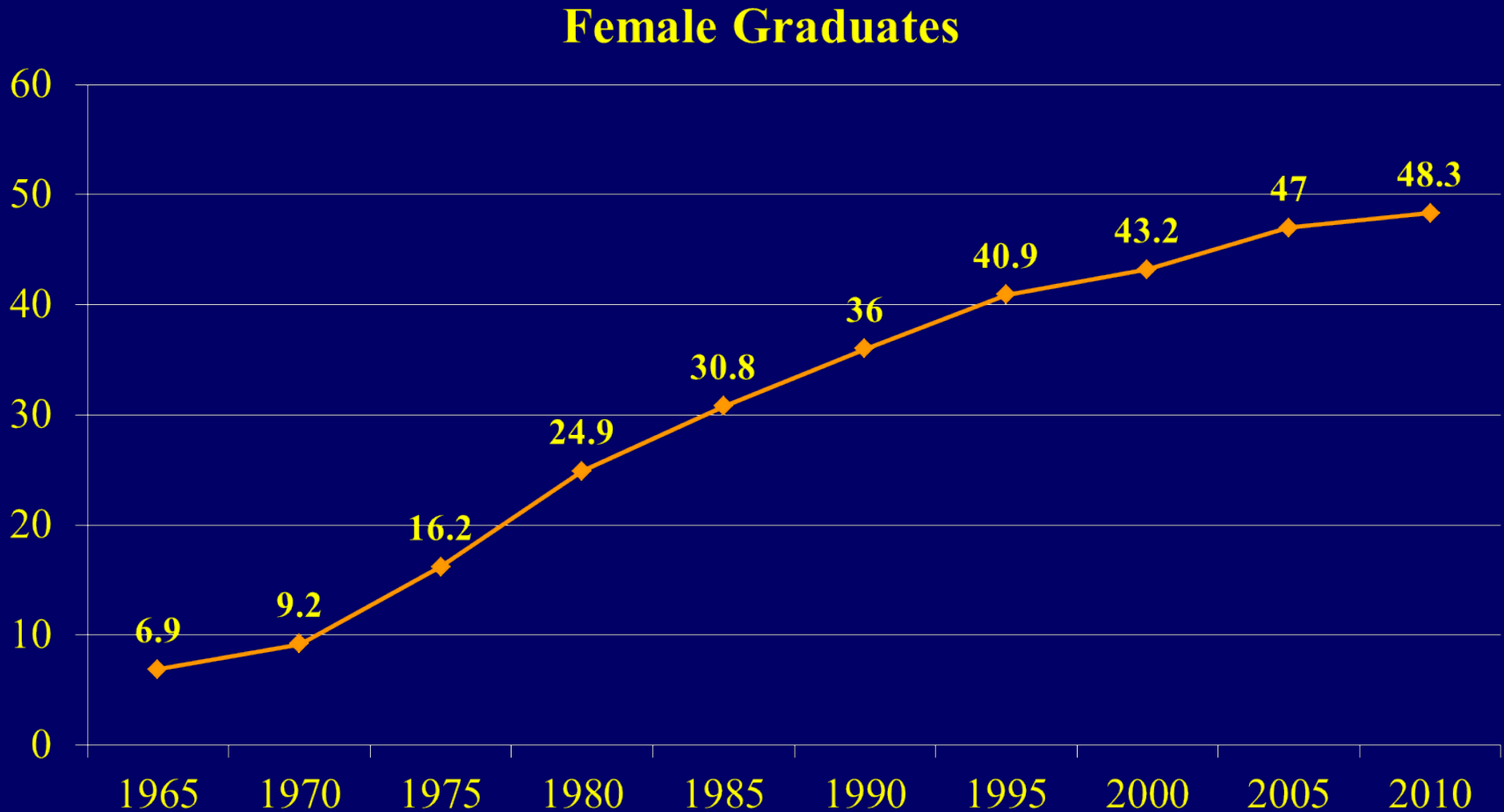
It is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. Everyone, irrespective of social group and background, must have the ability to walk through those gates.

# Case of Medicine in the U.S.

How well did Affirmative Action work  
for women and minorities?

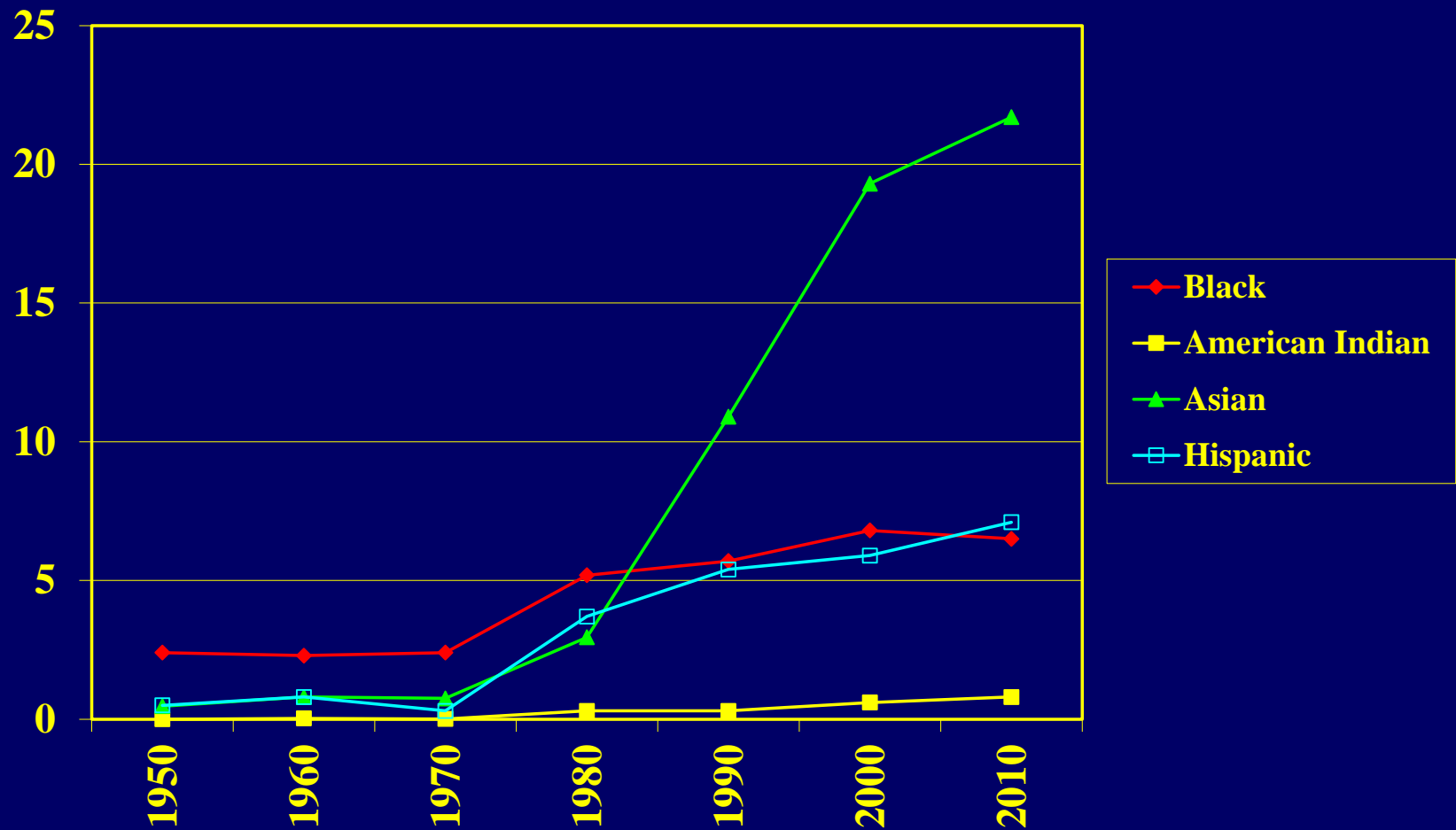
# Female Graduation Trends in US Medical Schools, 1965-2010

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# Minority Graduation Trends in US Medical Schools, 1950-2010

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The Differing Diversity Success and Outcomes for Women Versus Minorities Highlights the Critical Need of Making Investments to Ensure that all Are Enabled to Take Advantage of New Opportunities

# Progress (or lack thereof) in Medicine

- In 2014, there were 27 fewer African American males in the first year of Medical School than there had been 36 years earlier, in 1978
- In the mid- 1960s, 2.9% of all practicing physicians in the US were black, and in 2012, 3.8% of all practicing physicians were black (5.2% were Hispanic)

“There is nothing so unfair as the equal treatment of unequal people.”

- Thomas Jefferson

# Conclusions

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- Racism, in its multiple forms, is alive and well today
  - Its most powerful effects are through policies and procedures that are embedded in social institutions
  - We need to acknowledge and understand the current manifestations of racism
  - We need re-doubled efforts to mitigate its pathogenic effects
  - We need to create the political will and support to dismantle societal structures that support racism, ethno-centrism, anti-immigrant sentiments and incivility
-

"True compassion is more than  
flinging a coin to a beggar; it  
understands that an edifice which  
produces beggars needs restructuring."

- - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

# A Call to Action

“Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.”

- Robert F. Kennedy