

# Documenting the Health Consequences of Self-Reported Discrimination

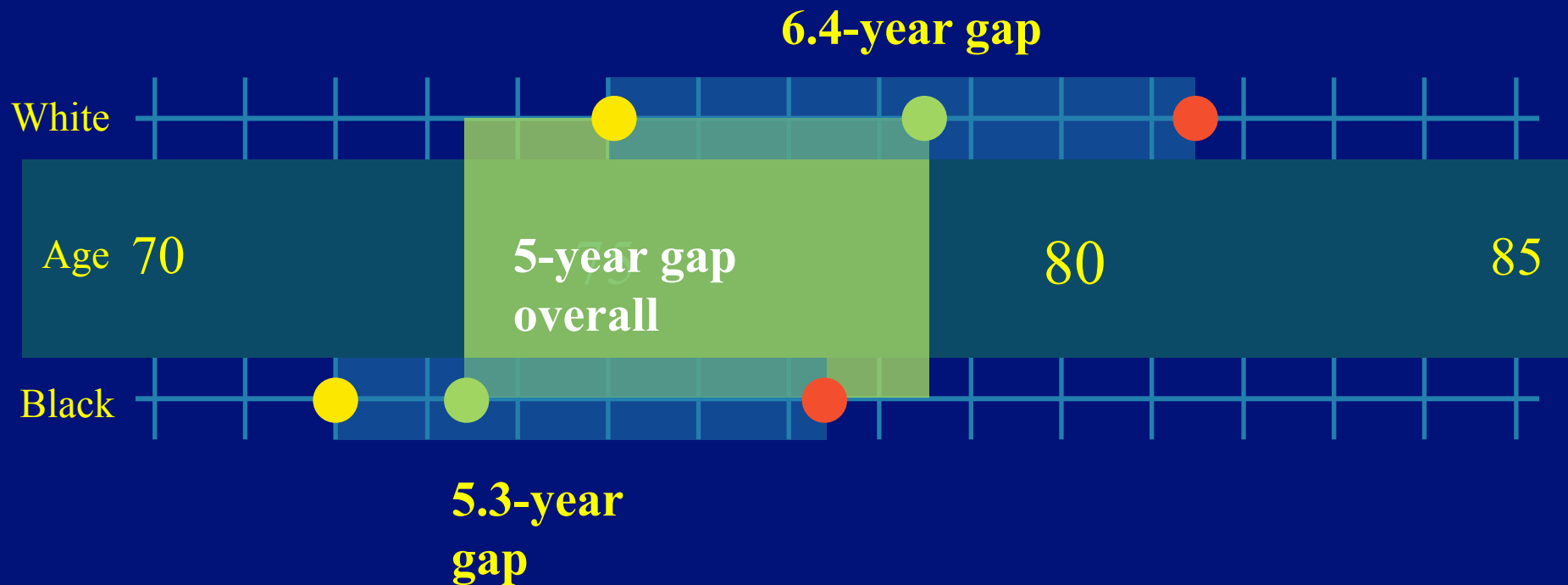
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# Understanding the Added Burden of Race

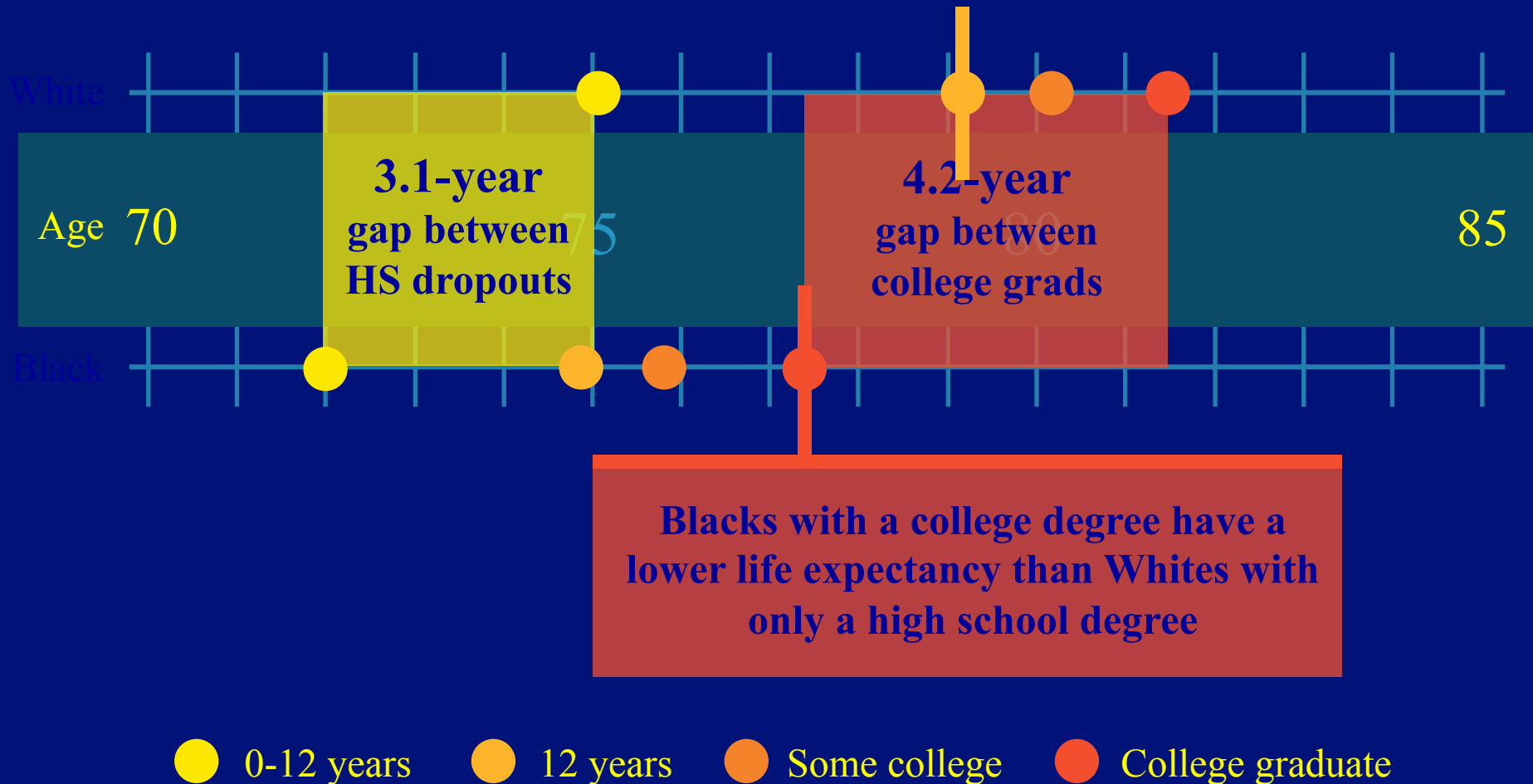
# Life Expectancy at Age 25 Based on Level of Education



● Overall    ● 0-12 years    ● College graduate

# 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 Pervasiveness of Discrimination

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# Discrimination

Obtaining bank loans

Getting insurance

Buying a home

Renting an apartment

Hailing a taxi

Getting a job

Purchasing a car

Suspended from preschool

Pulled over by police

Receiving a promotion

Cost of bail

Arrested for drug-related crimes

Quality of medical care

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# MLK Quote

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“..Discrimination is a hellhound that gnaws at Negroes in every waking moment of their lives declaring that the lie of their inferiority is accepted as the truth in the society dominating them.”

Martin Luther King, Jr. [1967]

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# 1995 Detroit Area Study (DAS)

- Unchartered territory
  - Collaborative effort
  - Spearheaded the raising of additional Funds to expand the DAS sample
  - Co-teaching the DAS sequence of courses
  - Finalizing the measures of Discrimination
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## Discrimination as Life Events: Major Experiences

- At any time in your life, have you ever been unfairly fired?
- For unfair reasons, have you ever not been hired for a job?
- Have you ever been unfairly denied a promotion?
- Have you ever been unfairly stopped, searched, questioned, physically threatened or abused by the police?
- Have you ever been unfairly discouraged by a teacher or advisor from continuing your education?
- Have you ever been unfairly prevented from moving into a neighborhood because the landlord or a realtor refused to sell or rent you a house or apartment?
- Have you ever moved into a neighborhood where neighbors made life difficult for you or your family?
- Have you ever been unfairly denied a bank loan?
- Have you ever received service from ... a plumber or car mechanic that was worse than what other people get?

# Major Experiences of Discrimination: Additional Questions

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- What do you think was the main reason for this experience?
  - When was the last time this happened?
  - How many times has this happened during your lifetime?
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# 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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# 2,032 Citations

Williams, David R., Yu, Yan, Jackson, James S., and Anderson, Norman B. (1997). “Racial Differences in Physical and Mental Health: Socioeconomic Status, Stress, and Discrimination.” Journal of Health Psychology. 2(3):335-351

*New National Data on Discrimination in  
America*

# Discrimination, U.S., 2015

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69%

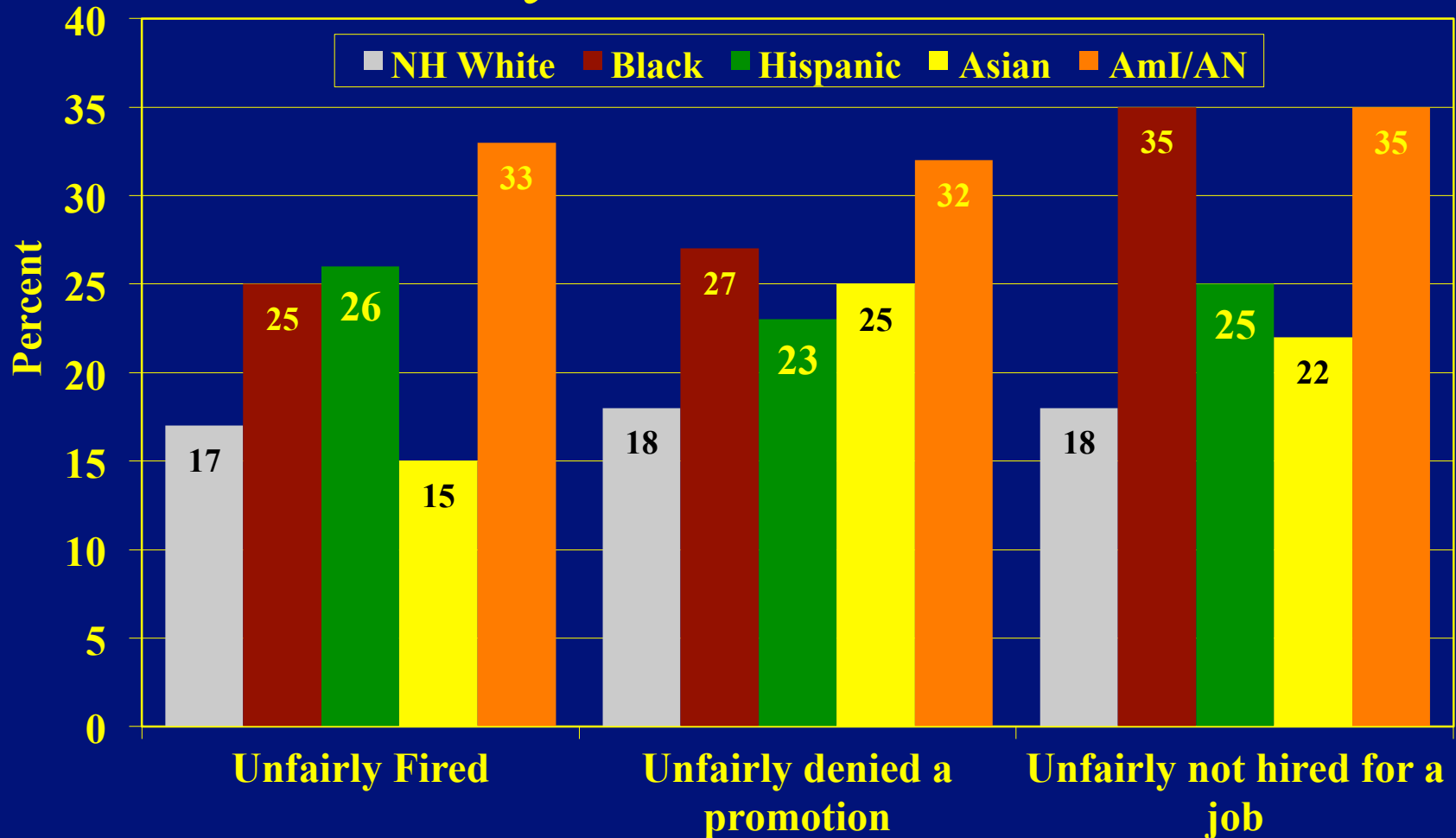
Of American adults report experiencing any discrimination

61%

Report experiencing everyday discrimination

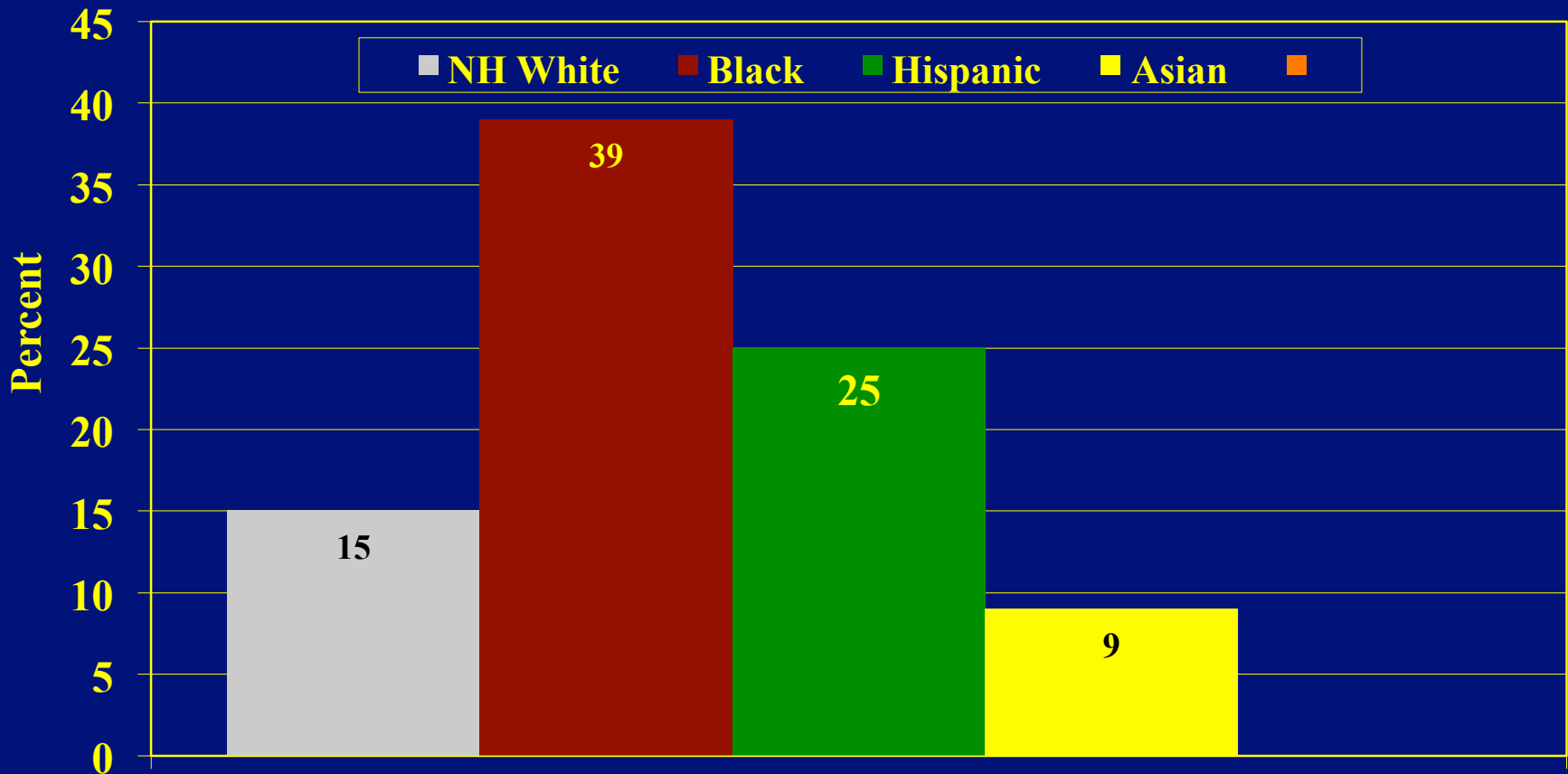
# Work Discrimination, 2015

## Have you ever been...?



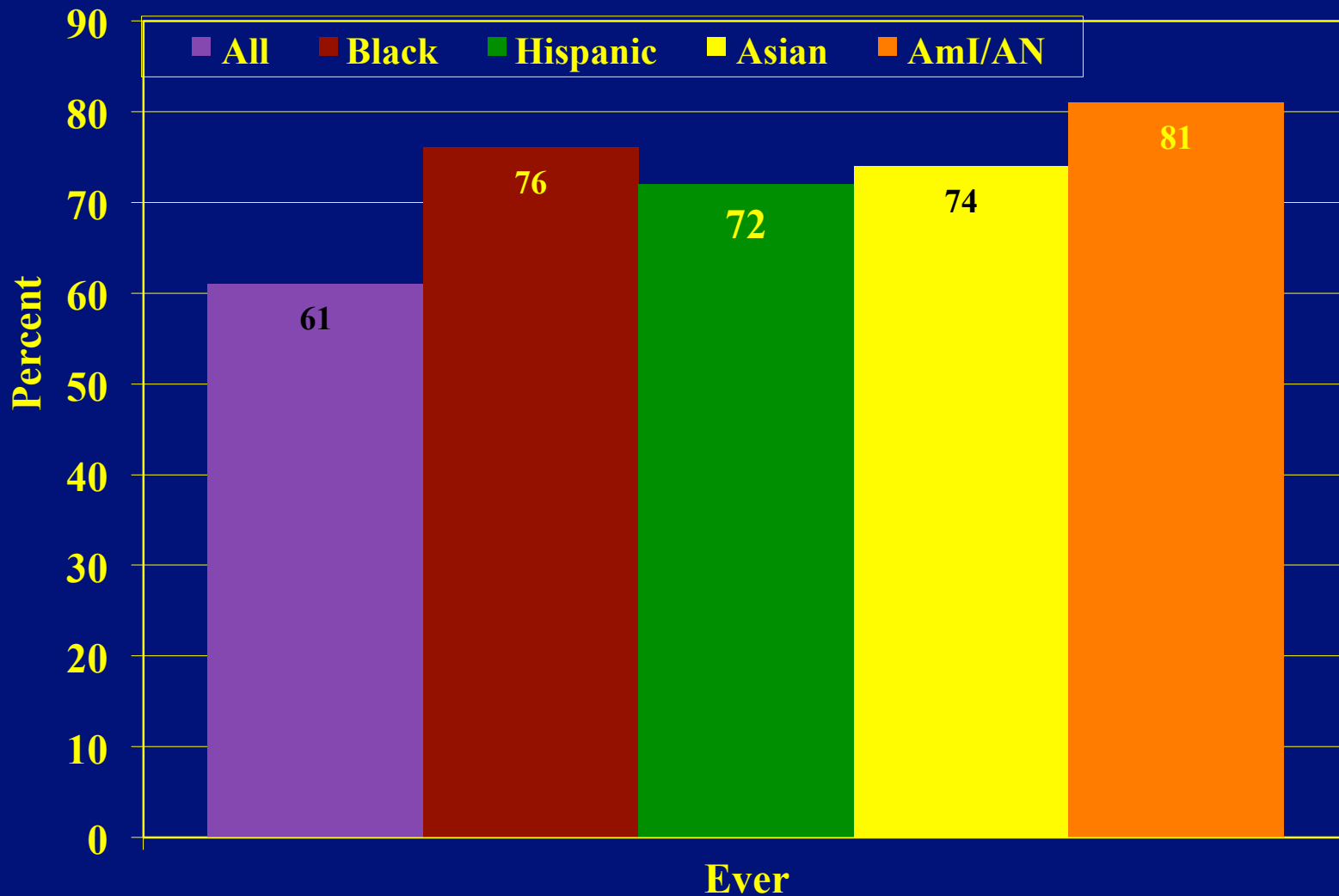
# Discrimination from Police, Men, 2015

Ever unfairly stopped, searched, questioned, physically threatened or abused by the police

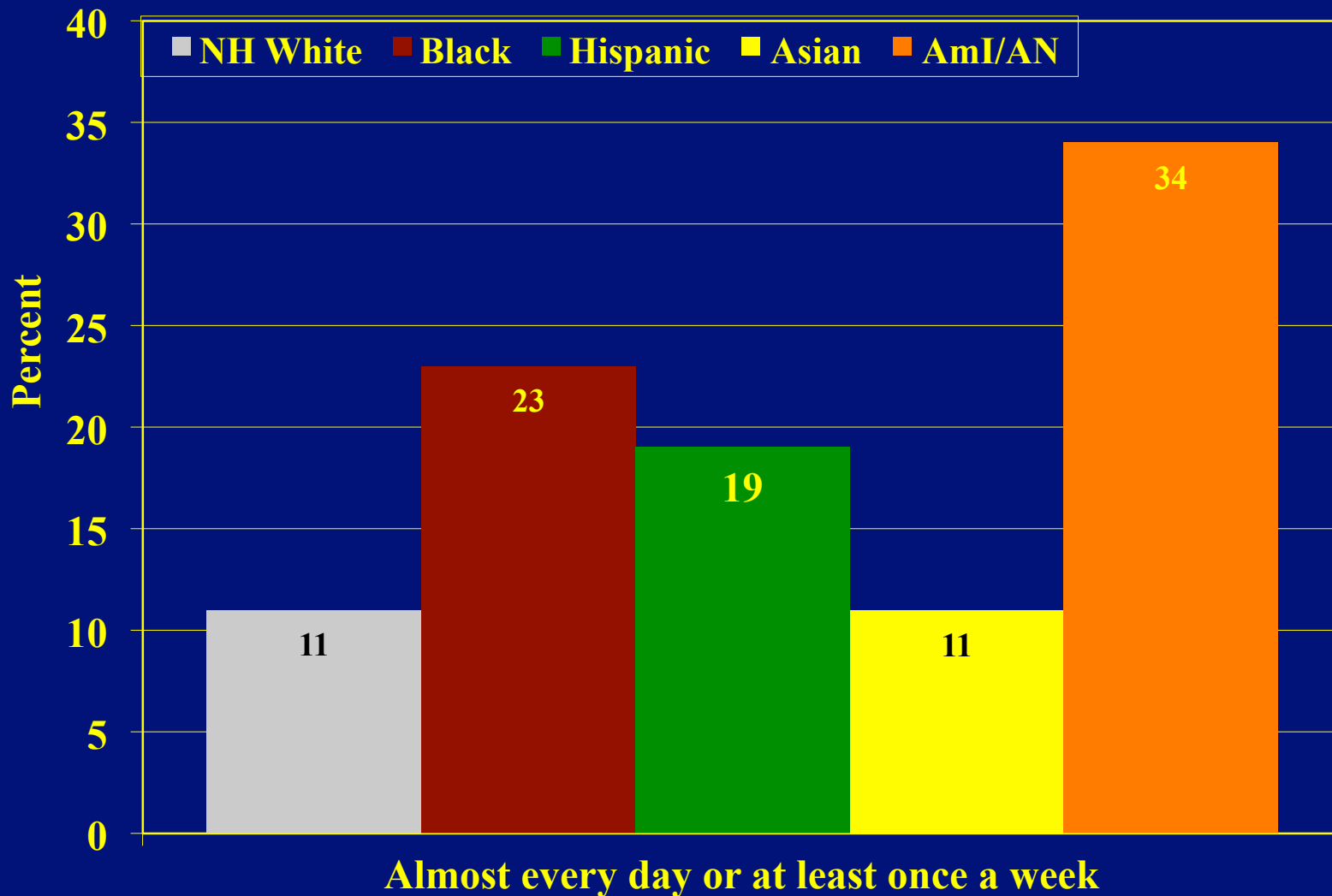




# Everyday Discrimination, 2015



# Everyday Discrimination, 2015





# 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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# NSBA: Temporal Ordering

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- Study of 779 black adults in Wave 2 (1987-1988) and Wave 3 (1988-1989) of the National Study of Black Americans (NSBA)
- High psychological distress and depression at Wave 2 are unrelated to reports of discrimination at Wave 3 – **indicating that** poor mental health did not predict subsequent reports of discrimination
- **Perceived racial discrimination at Wave 2 were associated with high levels of psychological distress, but not depression, at Wave 3**

## Perceived Threat of Discrimination:

Discrimination, like other stressors, can affect health through both actual exposure and the threat of exposure

# Heightened Vigilance Scale

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In dealing with the experiences that you just told me about, how often do you

1. Think in advance about the kind of problems that you are likely to experience?
2. Try to prepare for possible insults before leaving home?
3. Feel that you always have to be careful about your appearance (to get good service or avoid being harassed)?
4. Carefully watch what you say and how you say it?
5. Carefully observe what happens around you?
6. Try to avoid certain social situations and places?

# Heightened Vigilance and Health

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- Blacks have higher levels of vigilance
- Vigilance predicts elevated risk of depression and contributes to black-white disparity in depression
- Vigilance predicts elevated risk of sleep difficulties, independent of income and education. Disparity completely attenuated when adjusted for vigilance
- As vigilance increased, the racial/ethnic gap in hypertension widened for Blacks and Hispanics
- Vigilance remains predictive of hypertension when adjusted for hypertension risk factors & discrimination

*Examining Discrimination and Health  
across National Contexts: South Africa  
and the U.S.*



# Everyday, Racial Discrimination, Monthly +

