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## The Impact of Family on Students' Success

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COLLEGE *of* EDUCATION

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

. . .or,

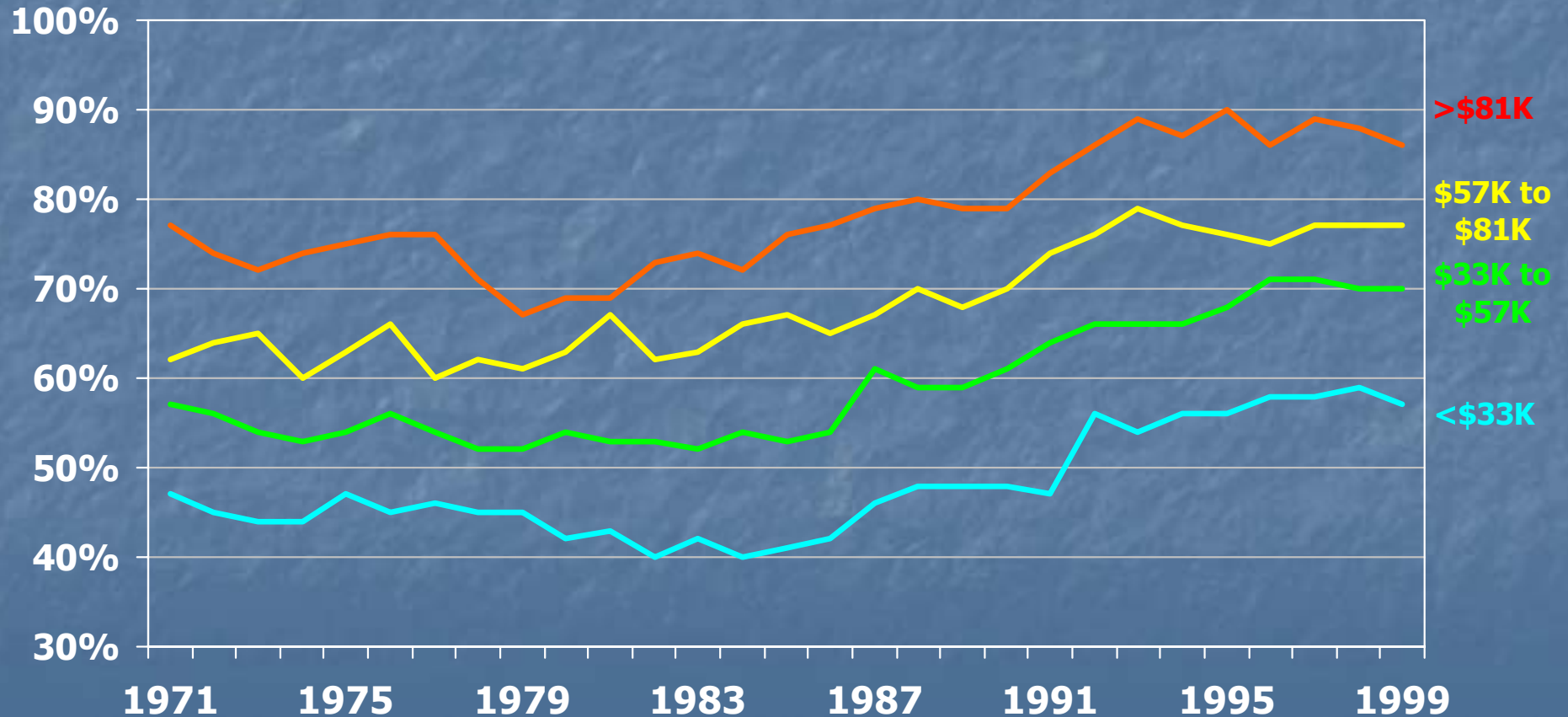
**What Family You Were Born Into Really Matters**

**but. . .**

**Family ≠ Destiny**

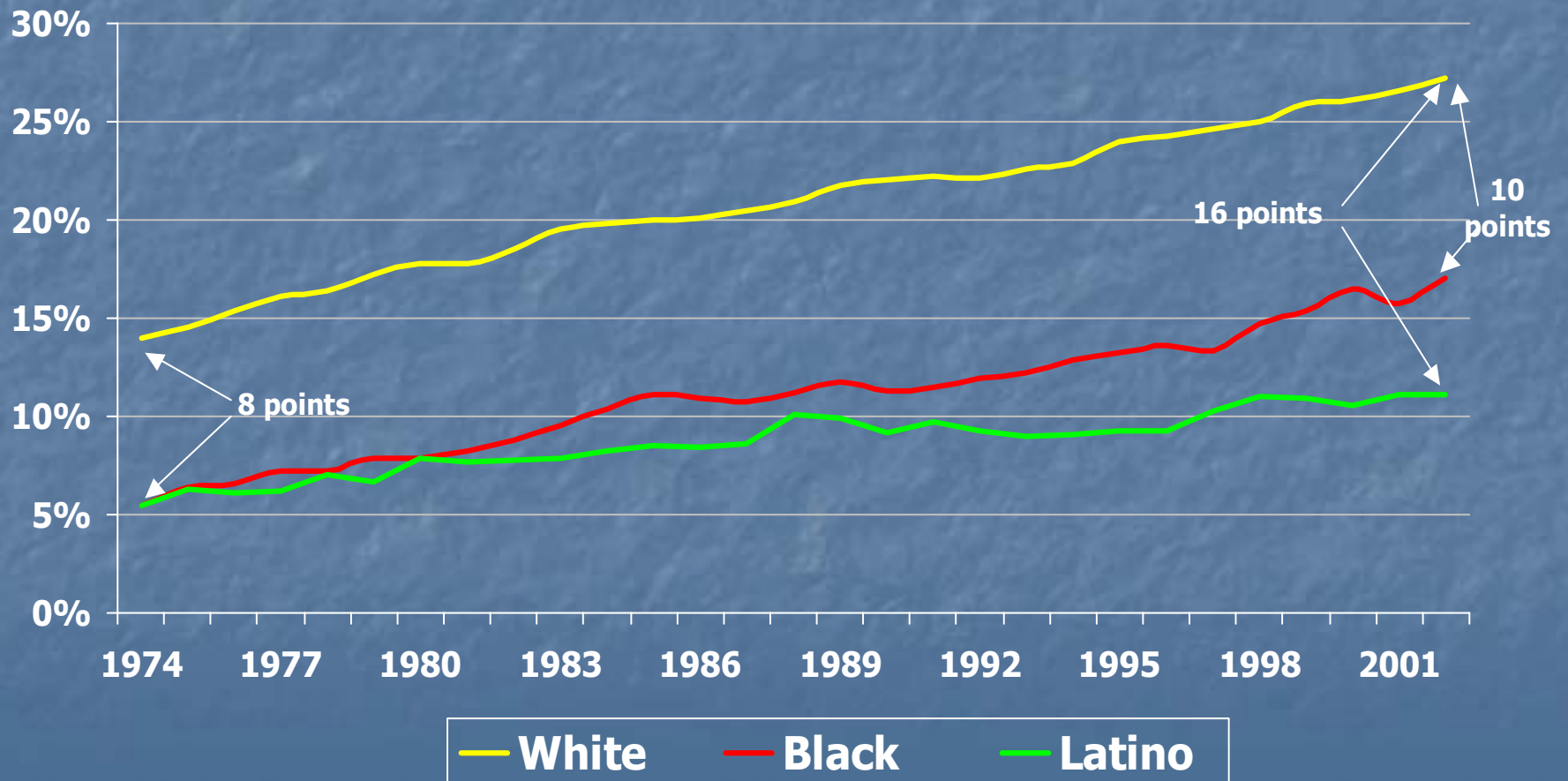
# Family background and college participation

College participation rates of unmarried 18-24 year old HS grads



# Family background and educational attainment

Proportion of population 25 years or older with at least 4 years college



# Family background and academics

Percentage of 1992 high school graduates attending college by 1994

		<u>SES Quartile</u>	
		Lowest	Highest
<u>Test Quartile</u>	Lowest	36%	77% <b>Not-so-smart rich kids</b>
	Highest	78% <b>Smart poor kids</b>	97%

# How families influence college decisions

- Aspirations
- Preparation
- Support
- Financial resources

# Family influence – pre-college experiences

- Experiences with postsecondary education
  - Parental educational attainment – if, where
  - Siblings and other relatives
  - Social and cultural capital
- Location, location, location
  - Schools – academic and social influences
  - Peers
  - Social support structures
  - Access to information
- Money, money, money
  - Resources to pay for college
  - Knowledge about how to gain resources – college savings, tax credits, financial aid
  - Access to “shadow education”

# Family influence – during college

- Financial support
  - Paying the bills
  - Ability not to work
  - Educational “accessories” – spring break, study abroad, internship possibilities
  - Luxuries
- Aspirations
  - Encouragement

## Family influence – after college

- Aspirations for post-baccalaureate education
- Influence of student loans and borrowing

# Negative family influences

- Demands of supporting a family
  - Parents
  - Siblings
  - Children
  - “Sandwich” generation

## Suggested reading

- McDonough
  - *Choosing Colleges: How Social Class and Schools Structure Opportunity*
- Hossler, Schmit, & Vesper
  - *Going to College: How Social, Economic, and Educational Factors Influence the Decisions Students Make*
- Pascarella & Terenzini
  - *How College Affects Students*
- McPherson & Schapiro
  - *The Student Aid Game: Meeting Need and Rewarding Talent in American Higher Education*