

# Cause of Death Contributions to Black/White differences in mortality 1985-2013

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# The Heckler Report

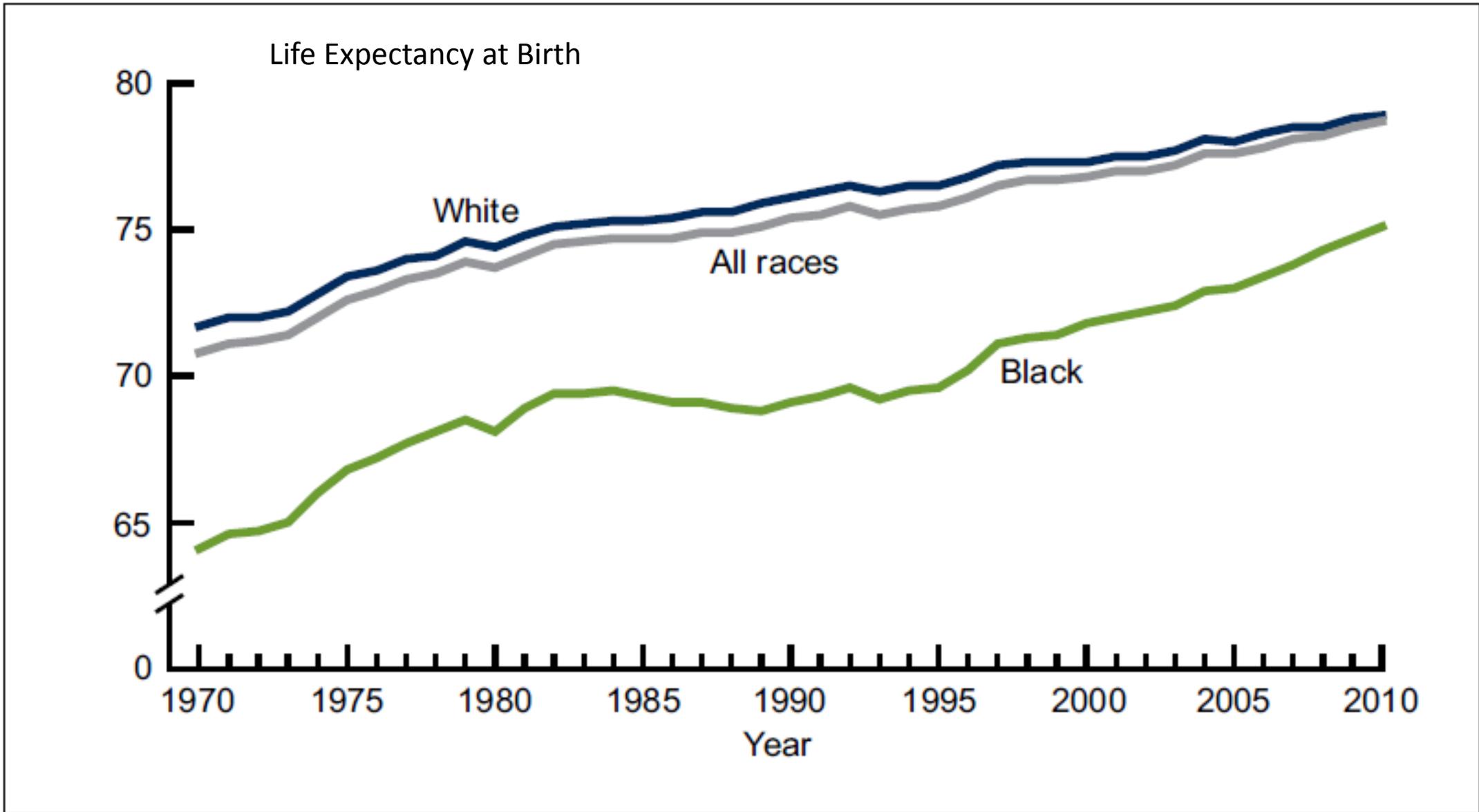
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- Report of the Secretary's Task Force on Black and Minority Health (1985)
- Secretary of Health and Human Services Margaret Heckler
- Developing effective policy requires an accurate description of the problem
- Demonstrating large differences in mortality between black and white populations in the United States

# Racial/Ethnic Differences in Health

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- There are large and persistent differences in health and survival across racial and ethnic populations in the United States



SOURCE: CDC/NCHS, National Vital Statistics System, Mortality.

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# Racial/Ethnic Differences in Health

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- There are large and persistent differences in health and survival across racial and ethnic populations in the United States
- Explanations
  - Differences in socioeconomic position – two sided
  - Segregation and neighborhood effects
  - Discrimination
  - Unequal access to health care
  - Intersectionality

# An Update is Needed

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- How far have we come in terms of reducing disparities in mortality between black and white populations in the United States?
- Which causes of death contribute to the black/white gap in mortality?
- Which causes of death contribute to *changes* in the black/white gap in mortality over time?

# Data

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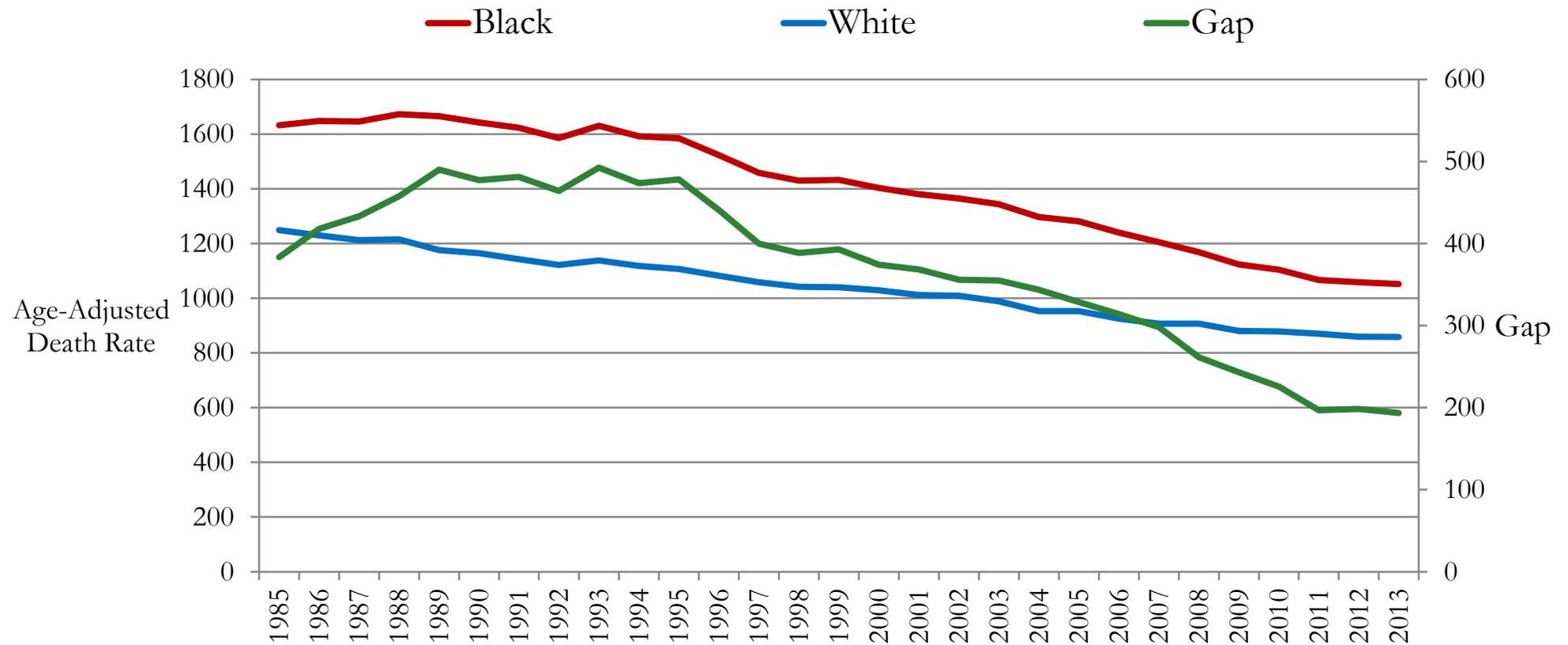
- US Vital Statistics Data 1985-2013
- Multiple Cause-of-Death public-use microdata files
- Age-standardized death rates by cause of death 1985-2013
  - Rankable causes of death ICD9 and ICD10

# Analysis

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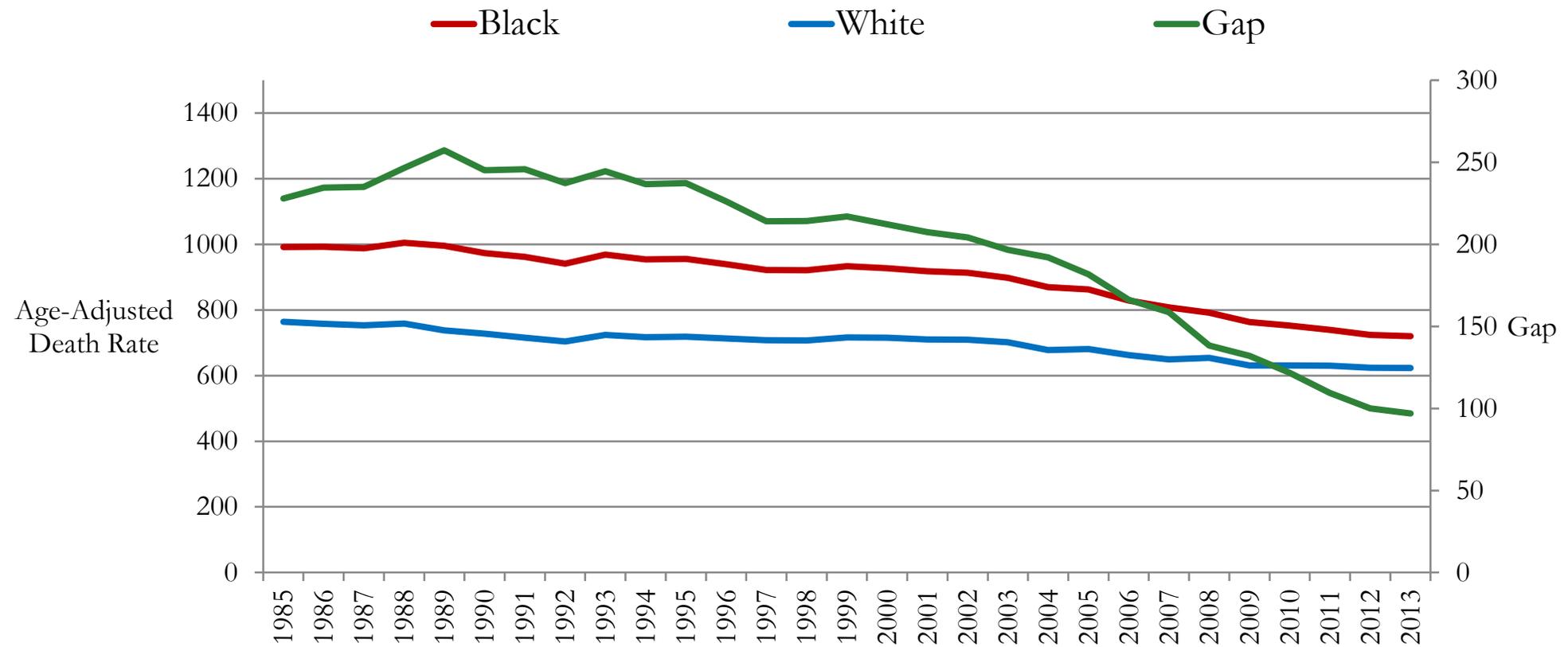
- Contribution of causes of death to black/white mortality gap
  
- Contribution of causes of death to change in black/white mortality gap

# Trends – Men



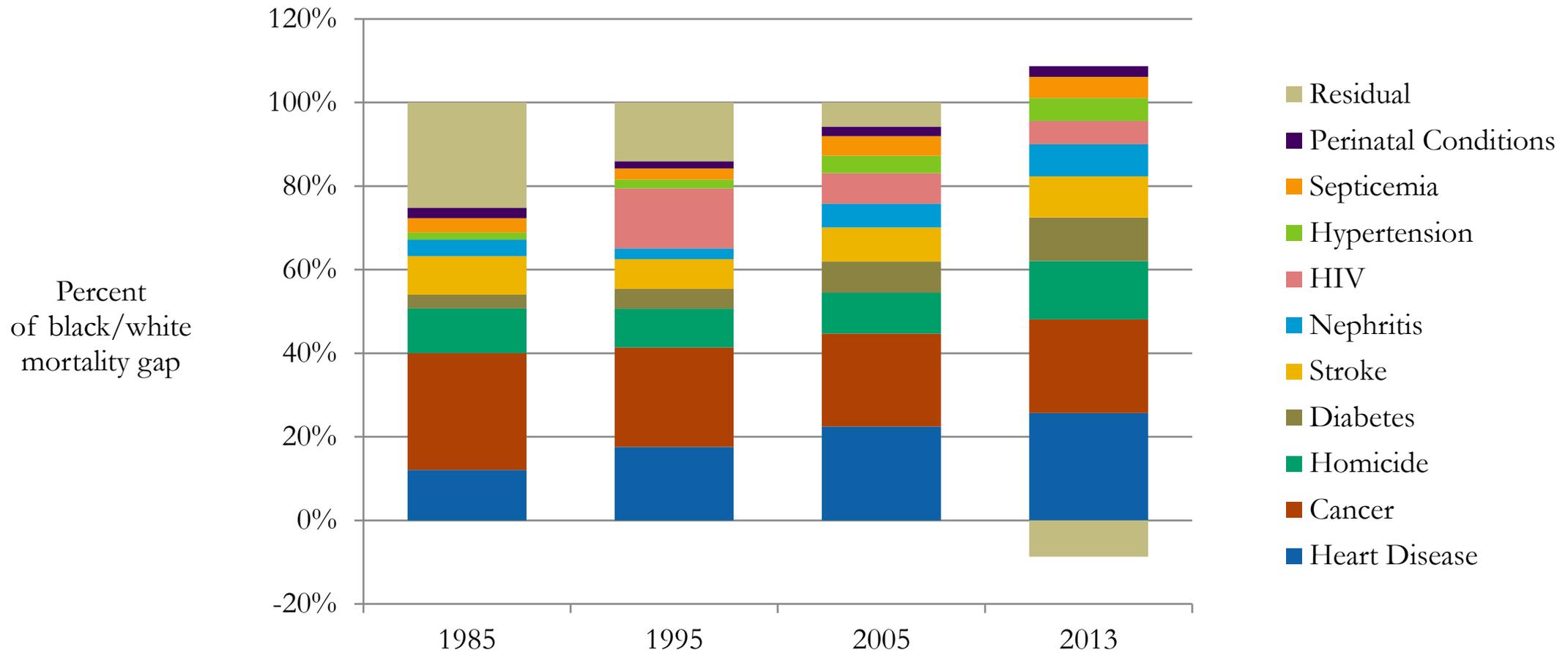
Source: Multiple Cause of Death Files, NCHS. Estimates may differ slightly from NCHS published results due to correction of mortality for 85+ age group.

# Trends – Women

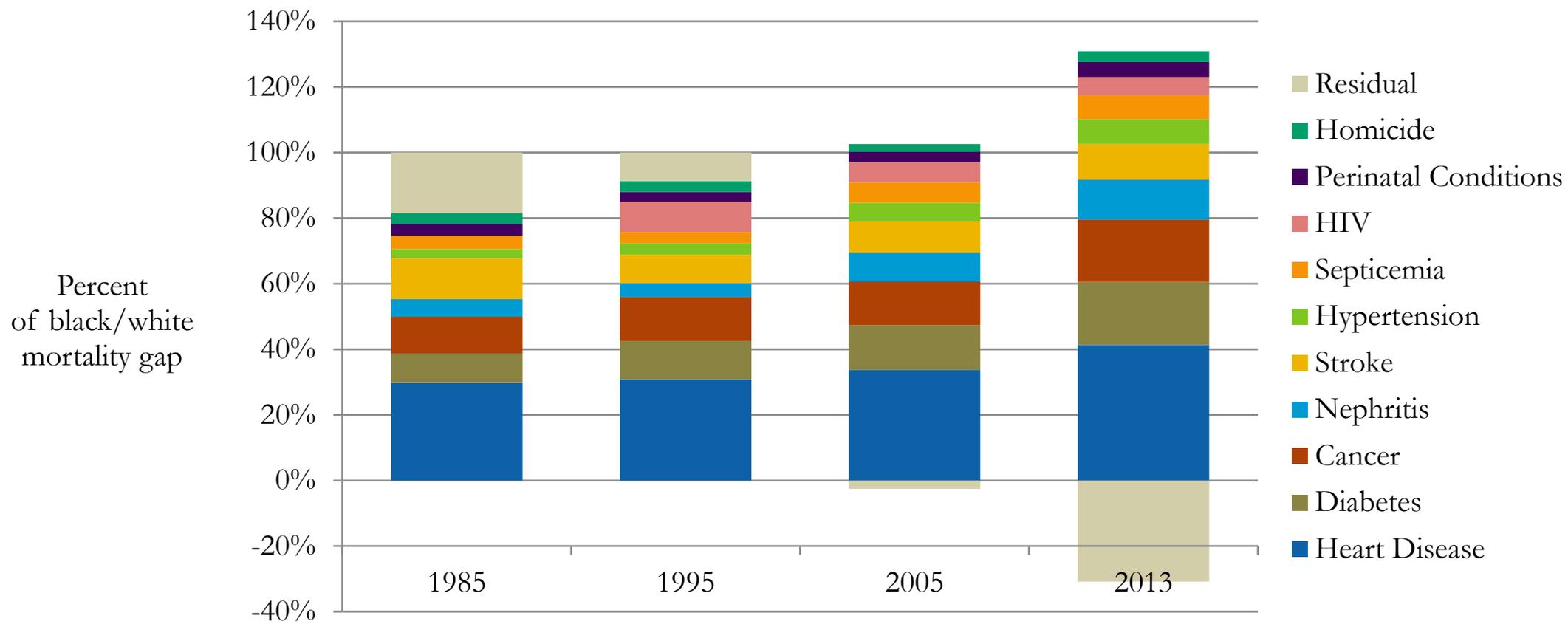


Source: Multiple Cause of Death Files, NCHS. Estimates may differ slightly from NCHS published results due to correction of mortality for 85+ age group.

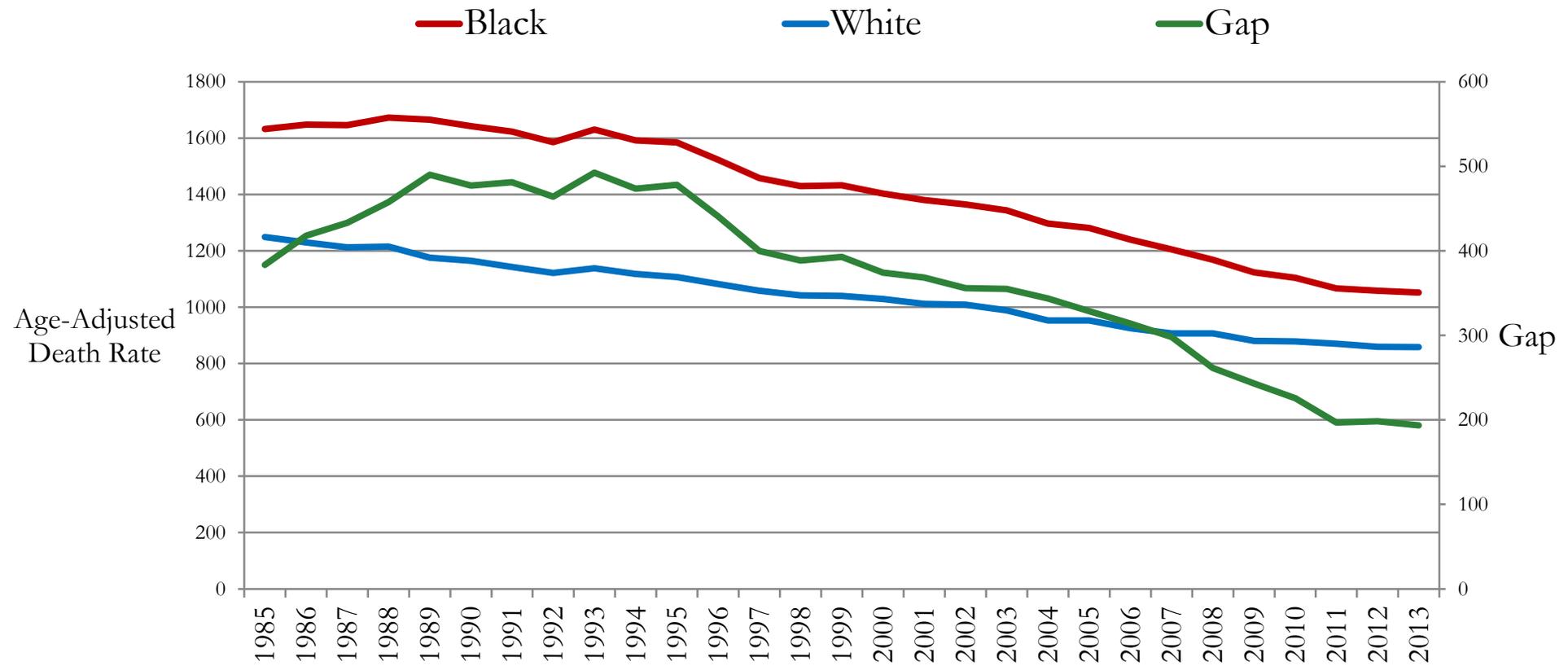
# Cause of Death Contributions – Men



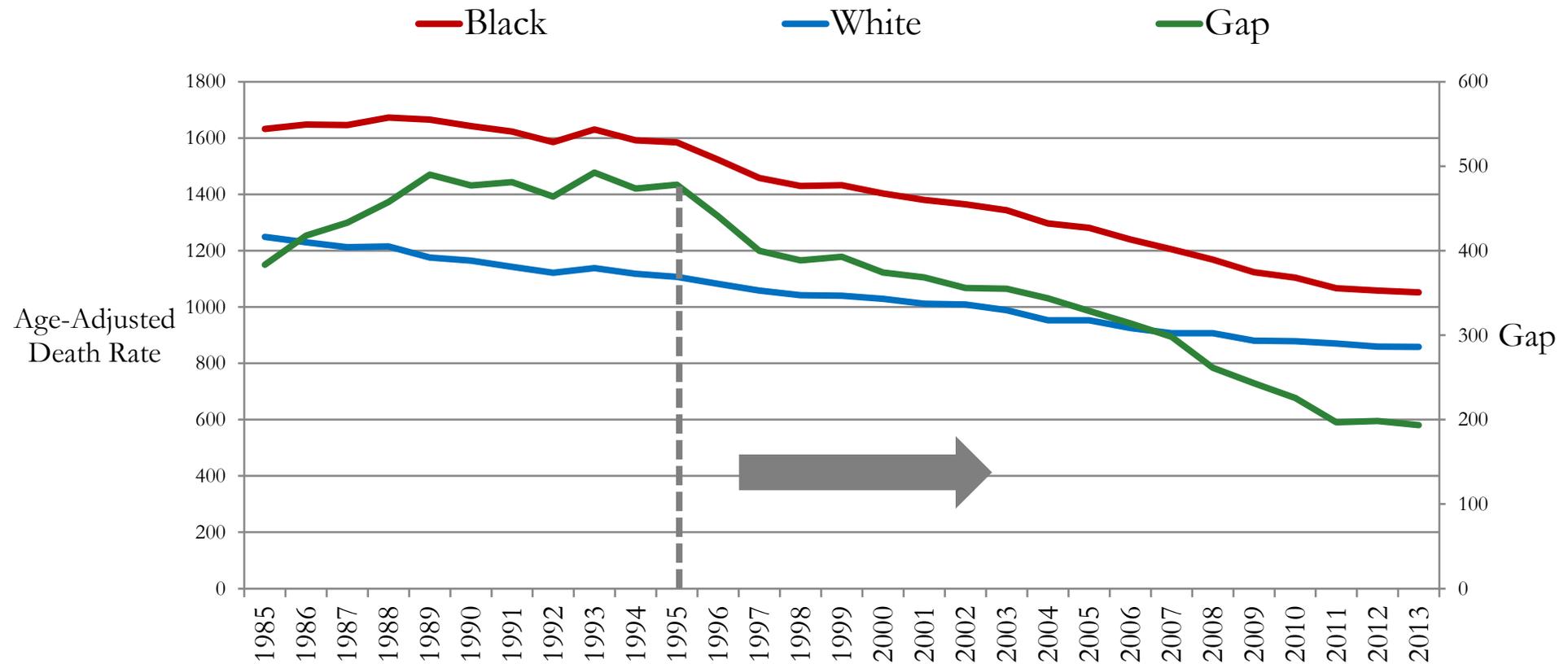
# Cause of Death Contributions – Women



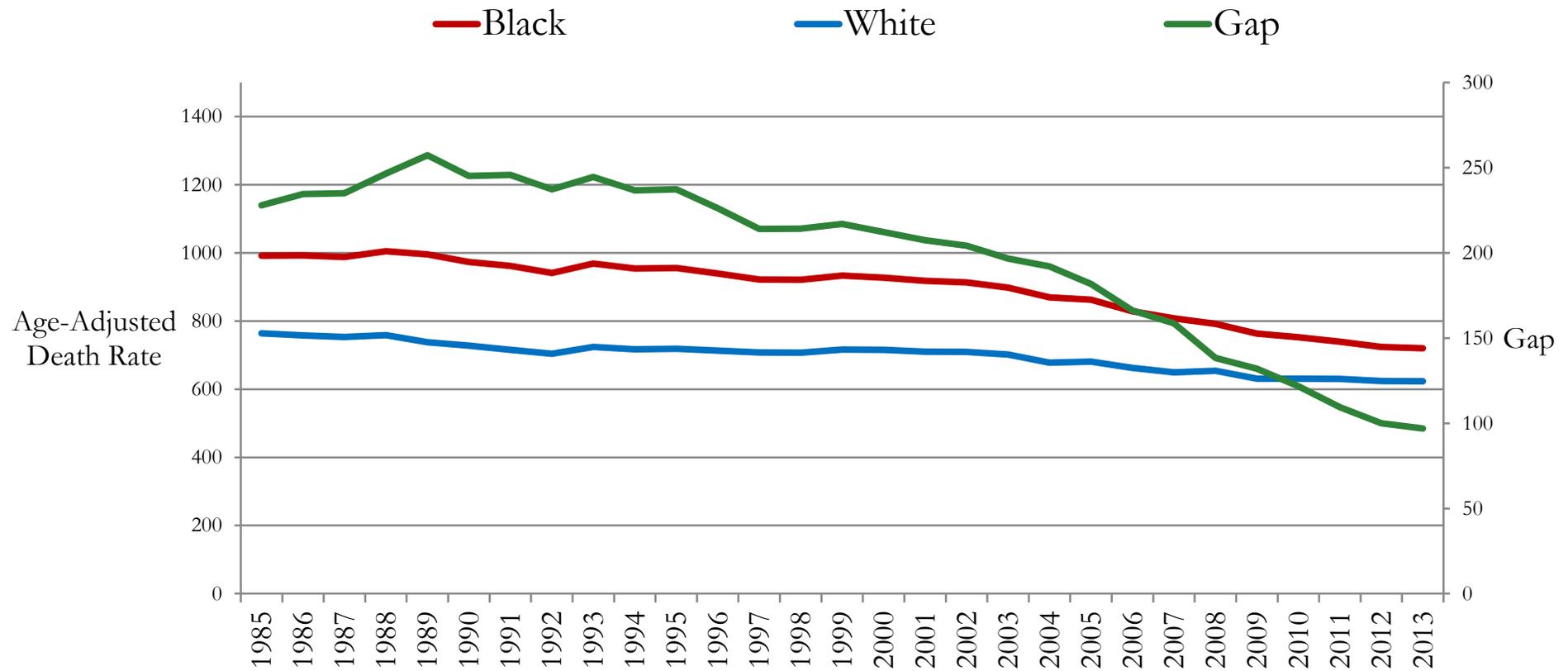
# Trends – Men



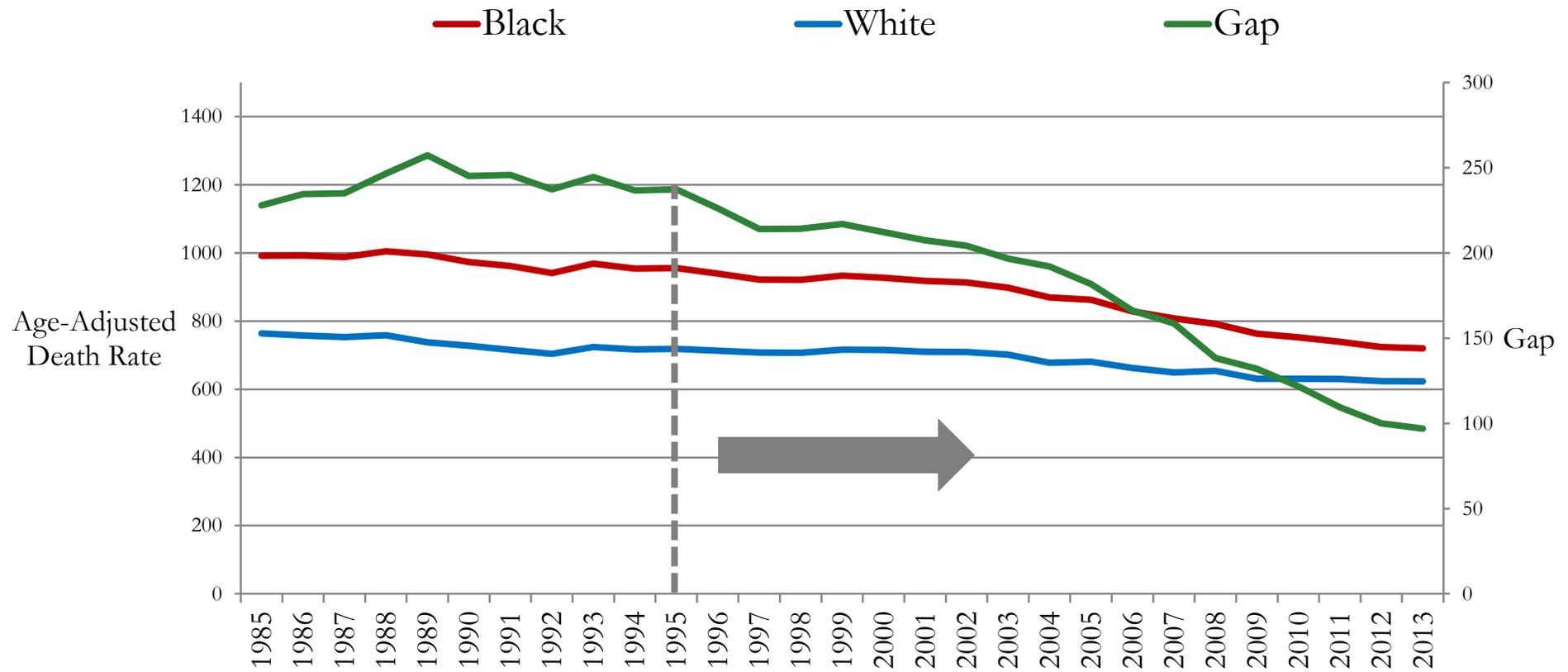
# Trends – Men



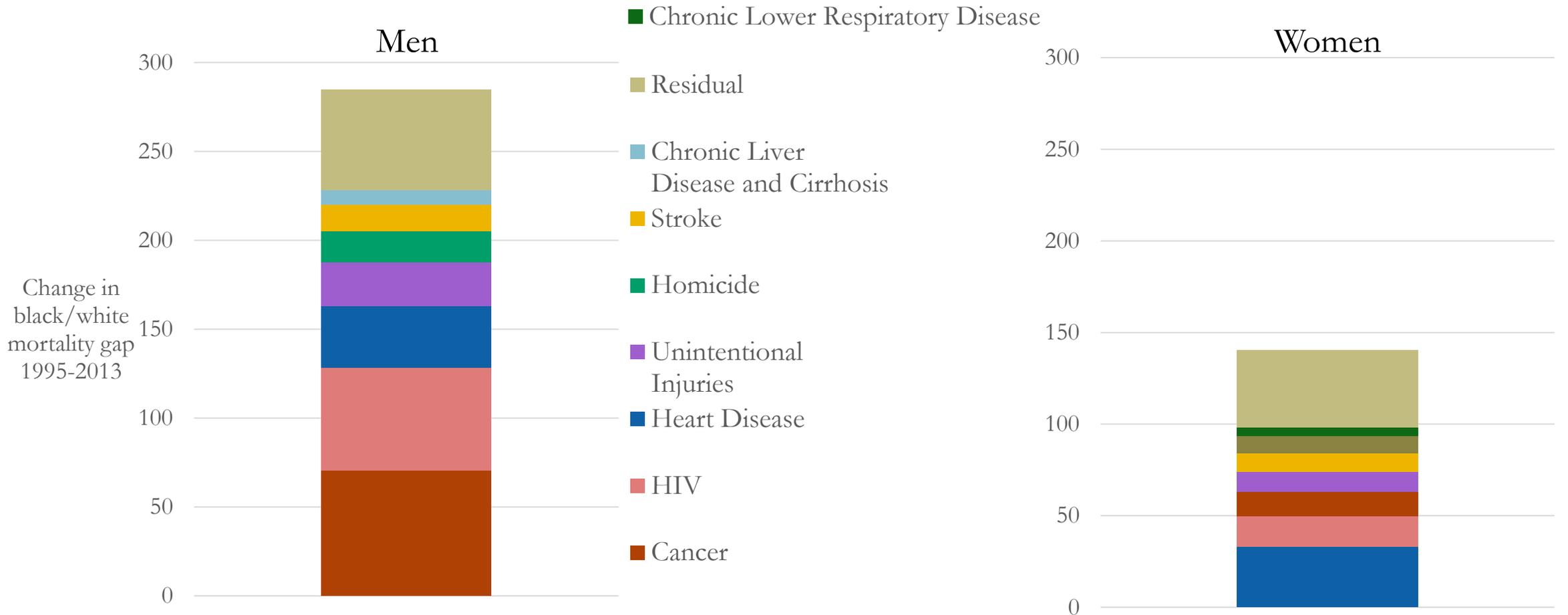
# Trends – Women



# Trends – Women



# Contributions to Narrowing Black/White Gap 1995 - 2013



# Summary of Findings

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- The black/white gap in mortality is large and persistent, but has narrowed since 1995
- The largest contributors to this gap among men are heart disease, cancer, and homicide (60%)
- The largest contributors among women are heart disease, diabetes, and cancer (80%)
- Between 1995 and 2013, cancer, HIV, and heart disease were responsible for 57% of the reduction in the black/white gap among men
- They were responsible for 45% of the reduction in the gap among women

# The legacy of the Heckler Report

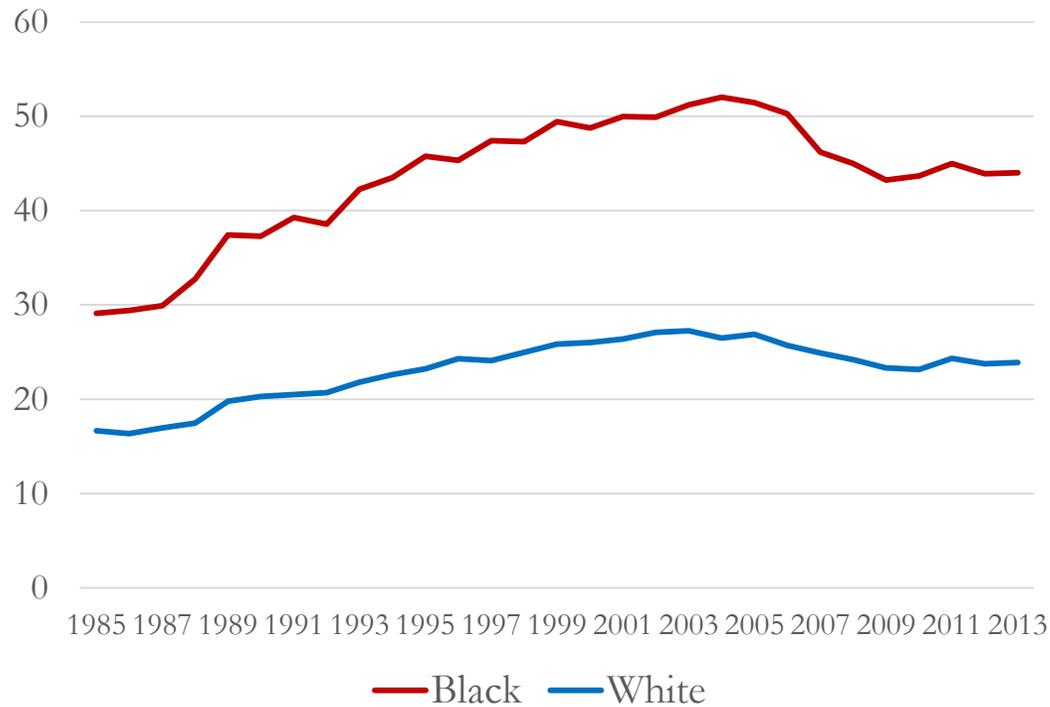
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- Highlighting the importance of quality data in research on race/ethnic disparities in health and mortality
- We've come a long way, but still have work to do
- Expanding outside the black/white focus
- Identifying shifting threats in racial and ethnic health inequality

# Shifting Threats

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## Diabetes



## Hypertension

