



COMMUNITY COLLEGES & THE SHARING OF THE AMERICAN DREAM

American Association of Community Colleges

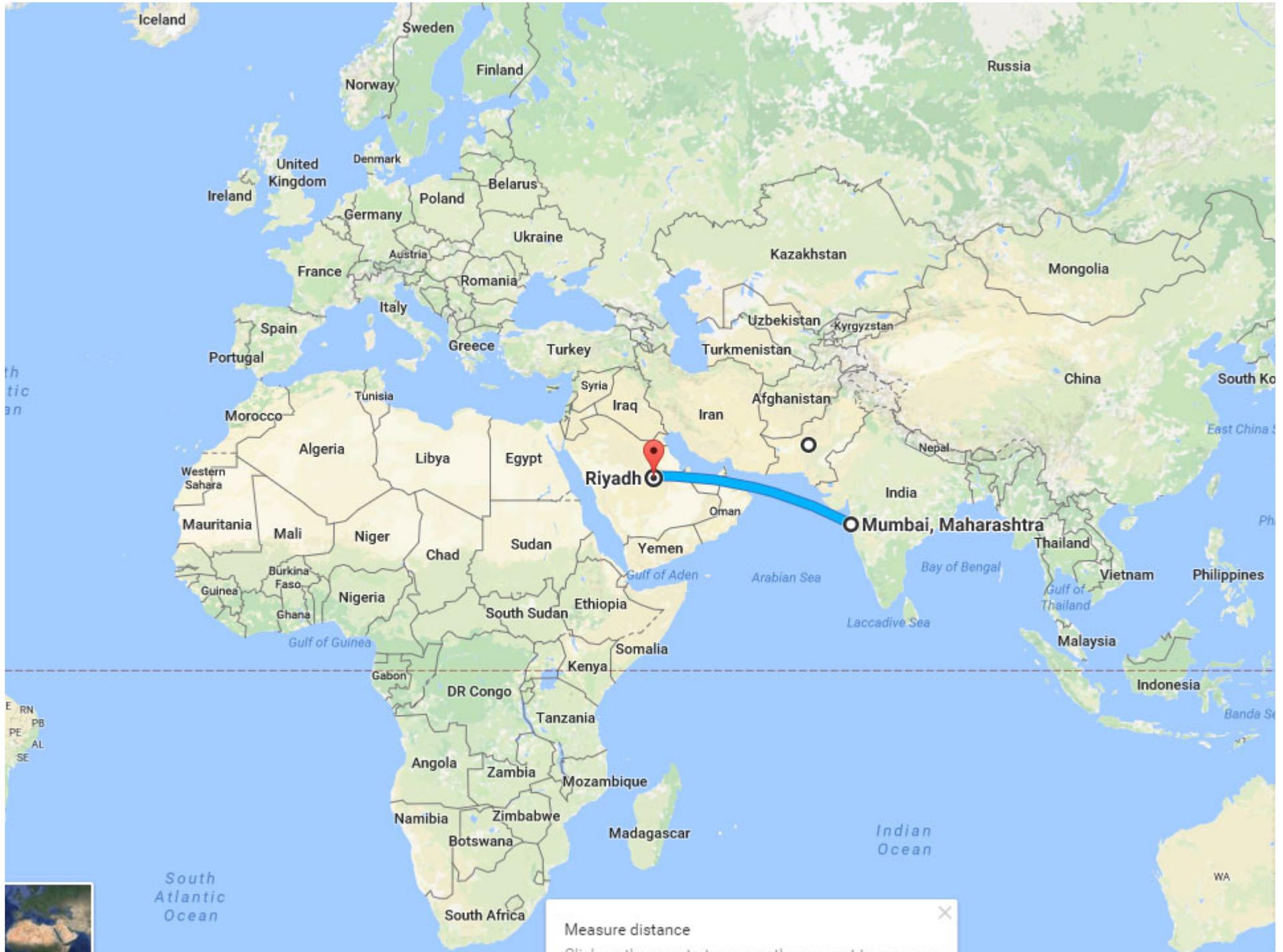
10th June 2019

Richard V. Reeves, Brookings Institution

 @richardvreeves























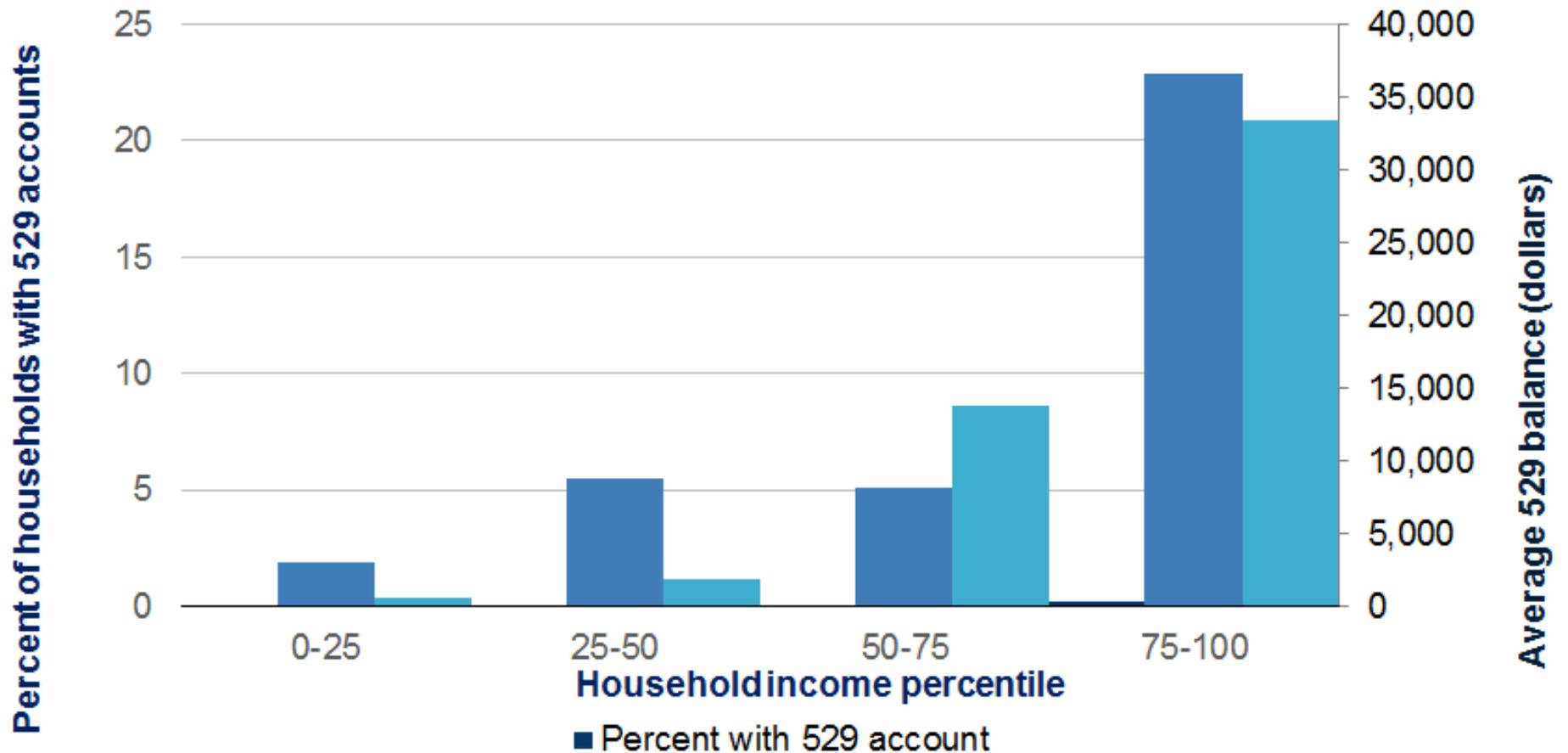


White House: Plan to end 529 tax benefits
'was a distraction'



 **Play Video 2:03**

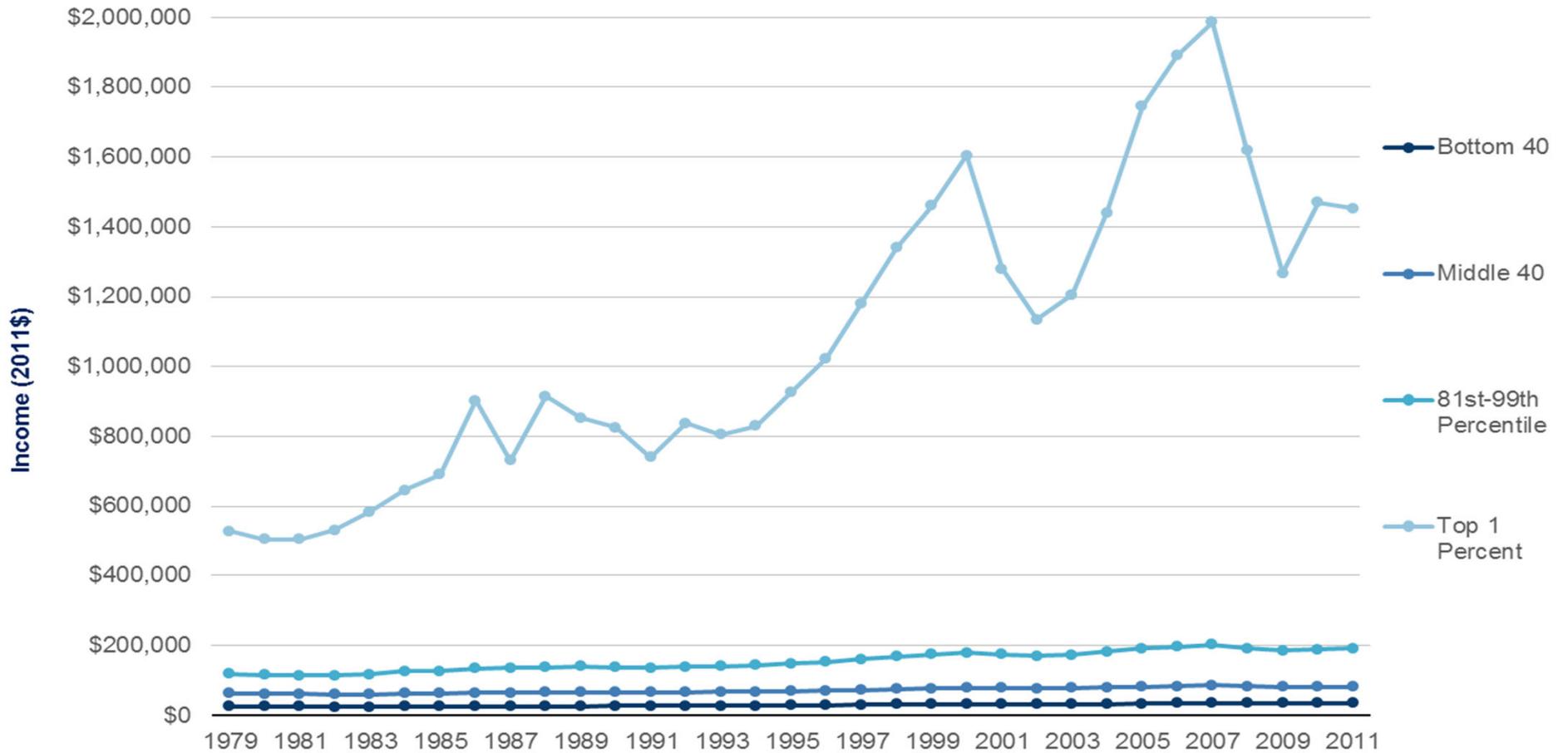
Distribution of 529 holders



Source: U.S. Department of the Treasury, "An Analysis of Section 529 College Saving and Prepaid Tuition Plans," September 9, 2009, Table 7.

We are the 99%!

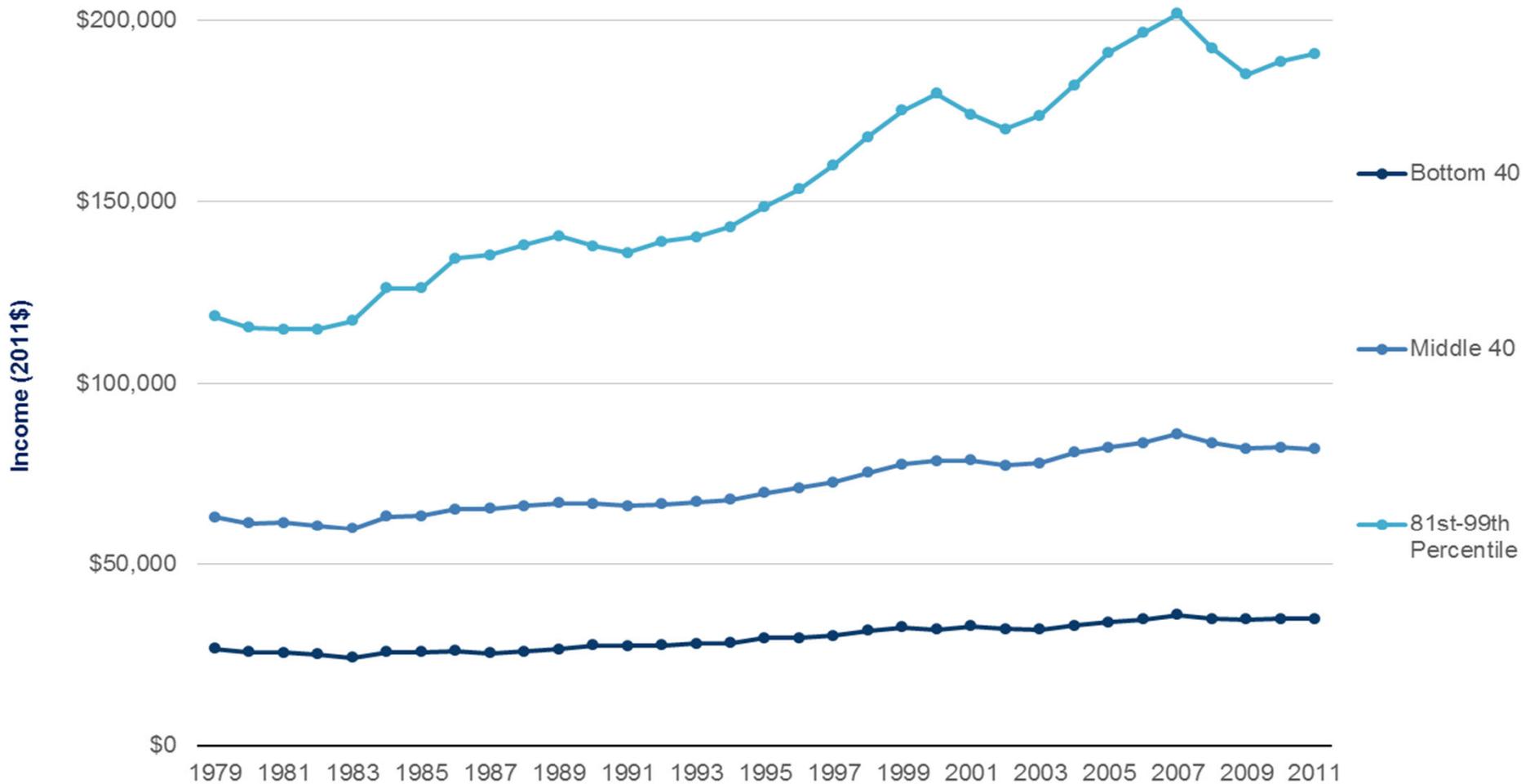
Average real household income, 1979-2013



Source: CBO
 Note: Income is pre-tax.

Or not?...

Average real household income, 1979-2013



Separation also in...

- Family structure and stability
- Health
- Wealth
- Life expectancy
- Culture & social capital
- Neighborhoods
- Education...



RICHARD V. REEVES

DREAM HOARDERS

HOW THE AMERICAN
UPPER MIDDLE CLASS

IS LEAVING EVERYONE

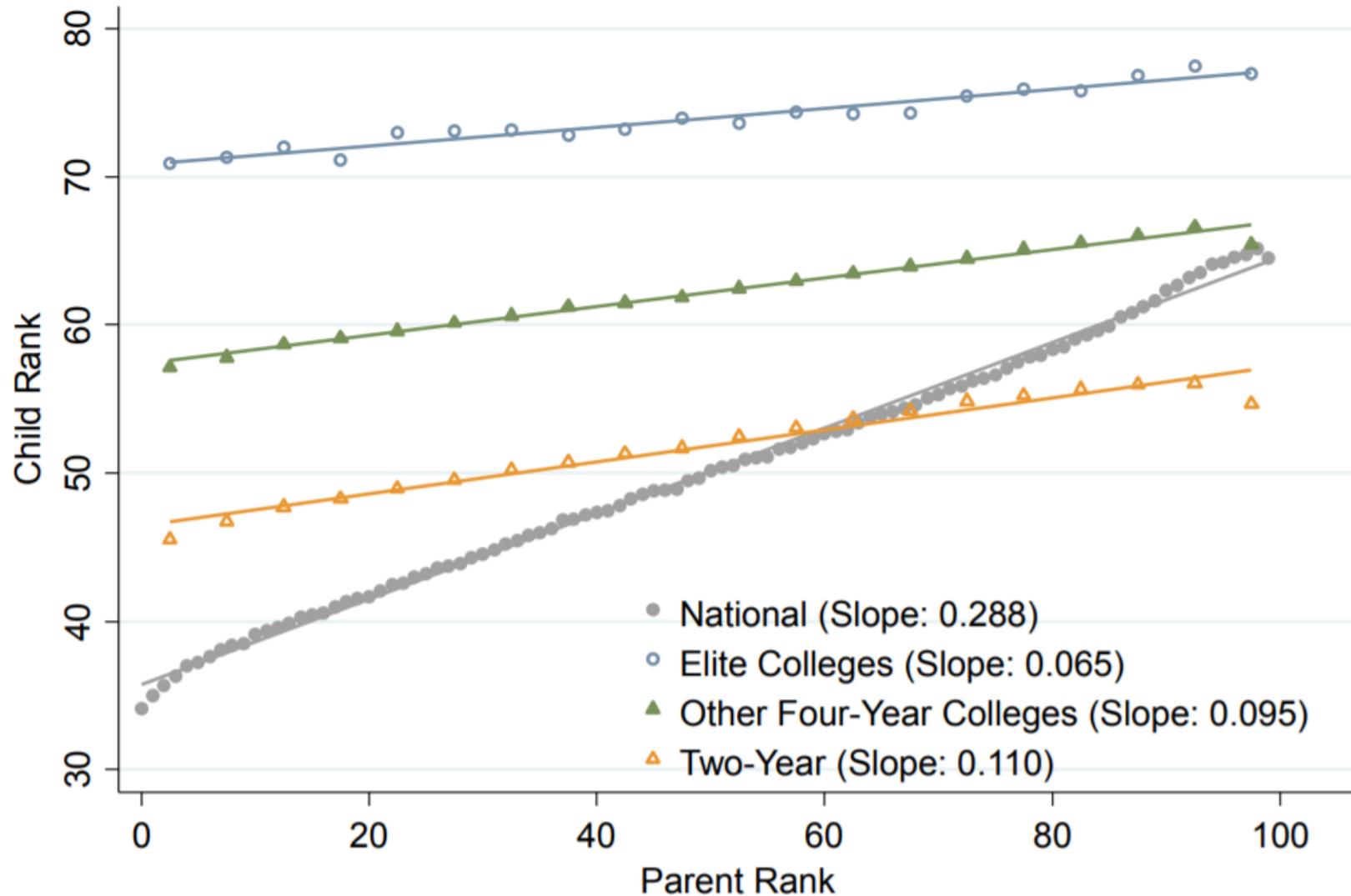
ELSE IN THE DUST,

WHY THAT IS A PROBLEM,

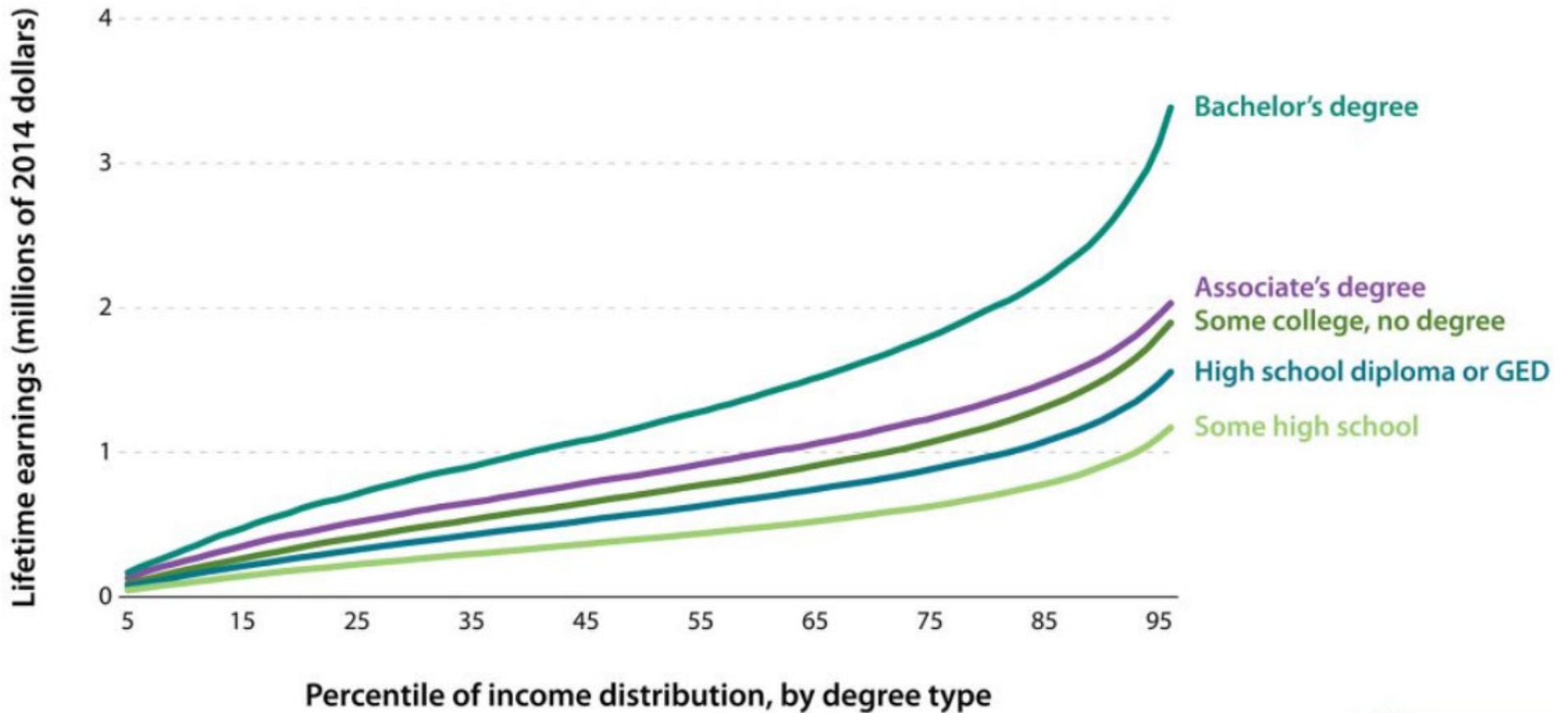
AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

Education: The Great Equalizer

The leveling power of college...

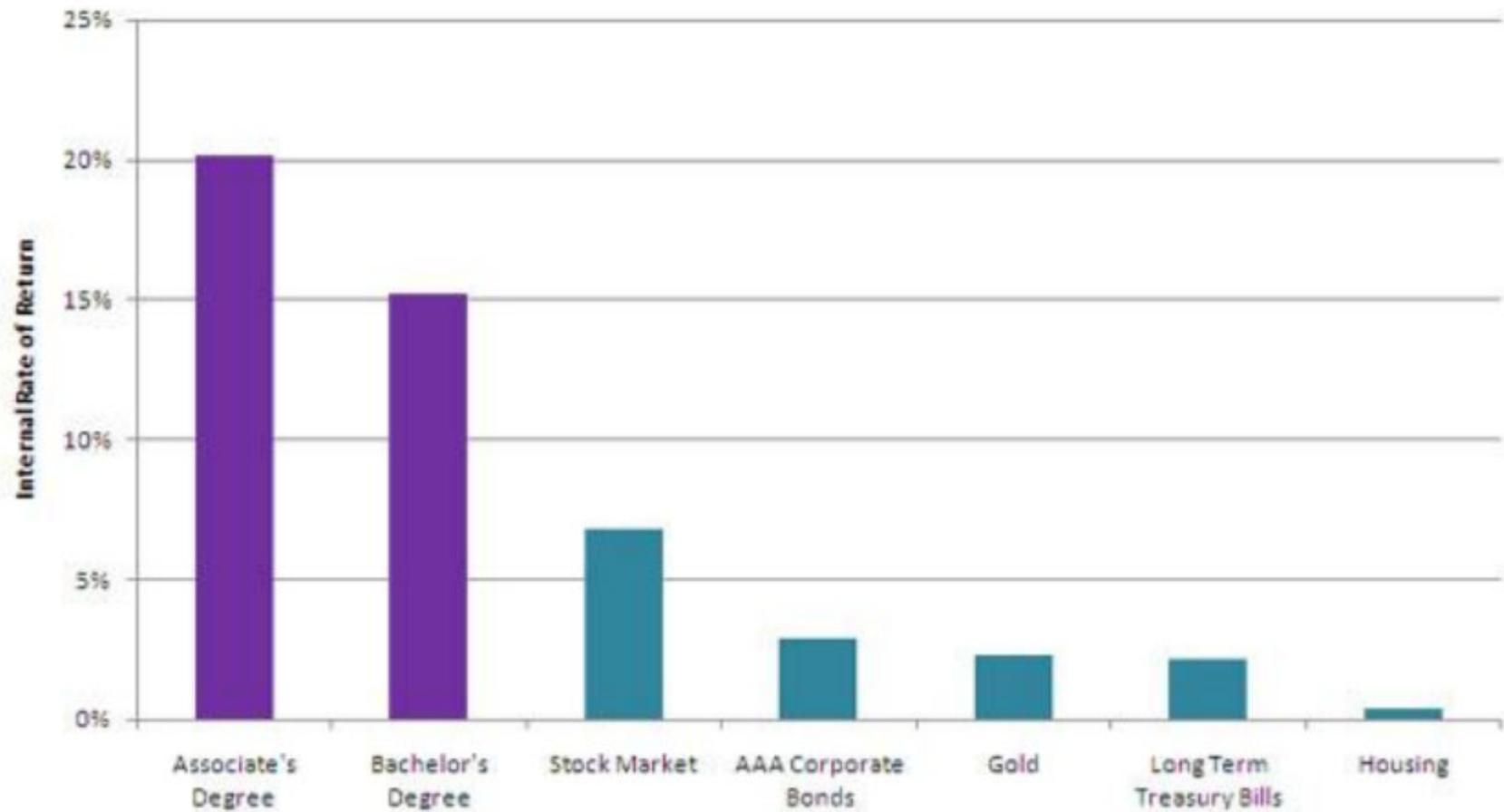


But 4-year+ biggest pay bump



The ROI on college...

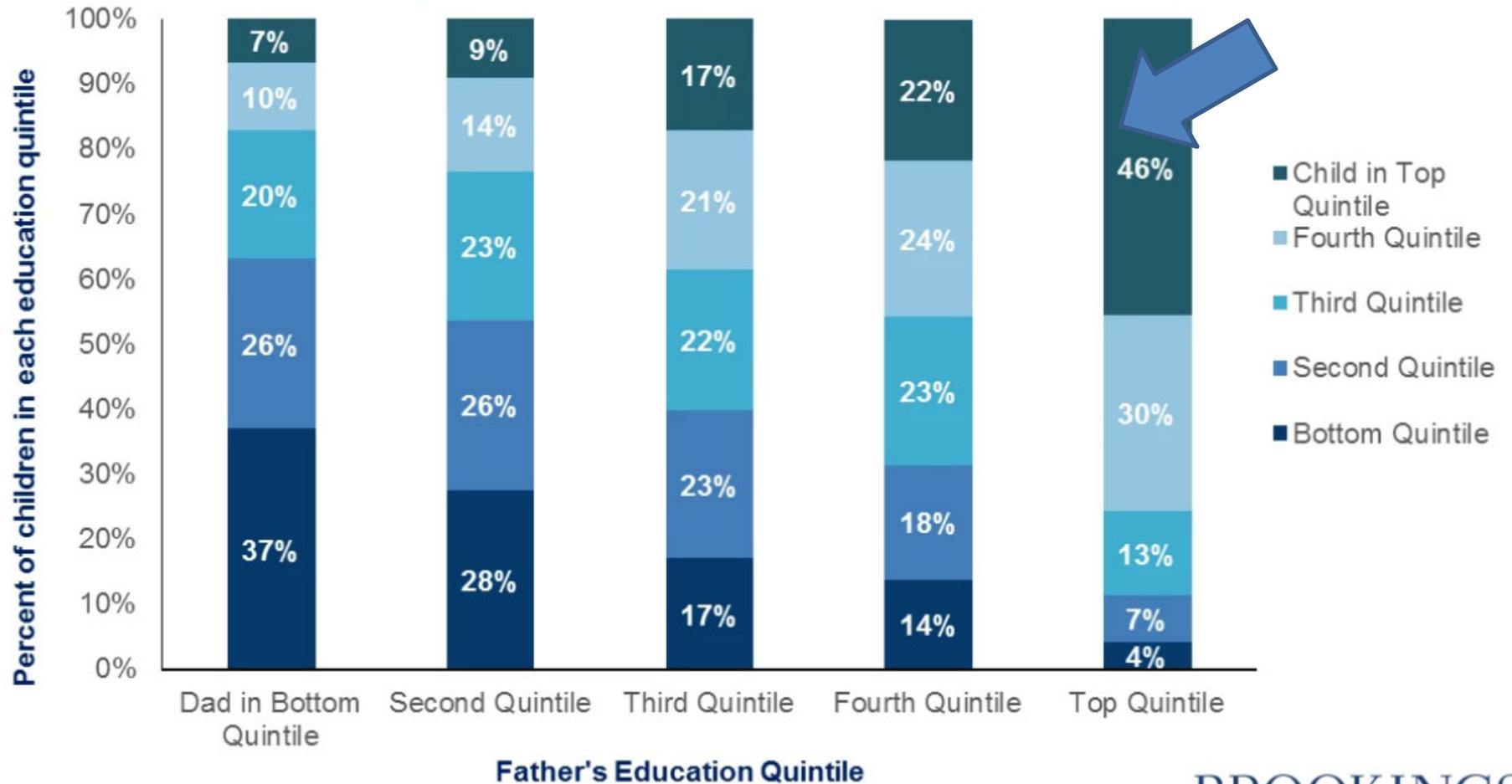
College Compared to Alternative Investments



But....

Stickiness of....education

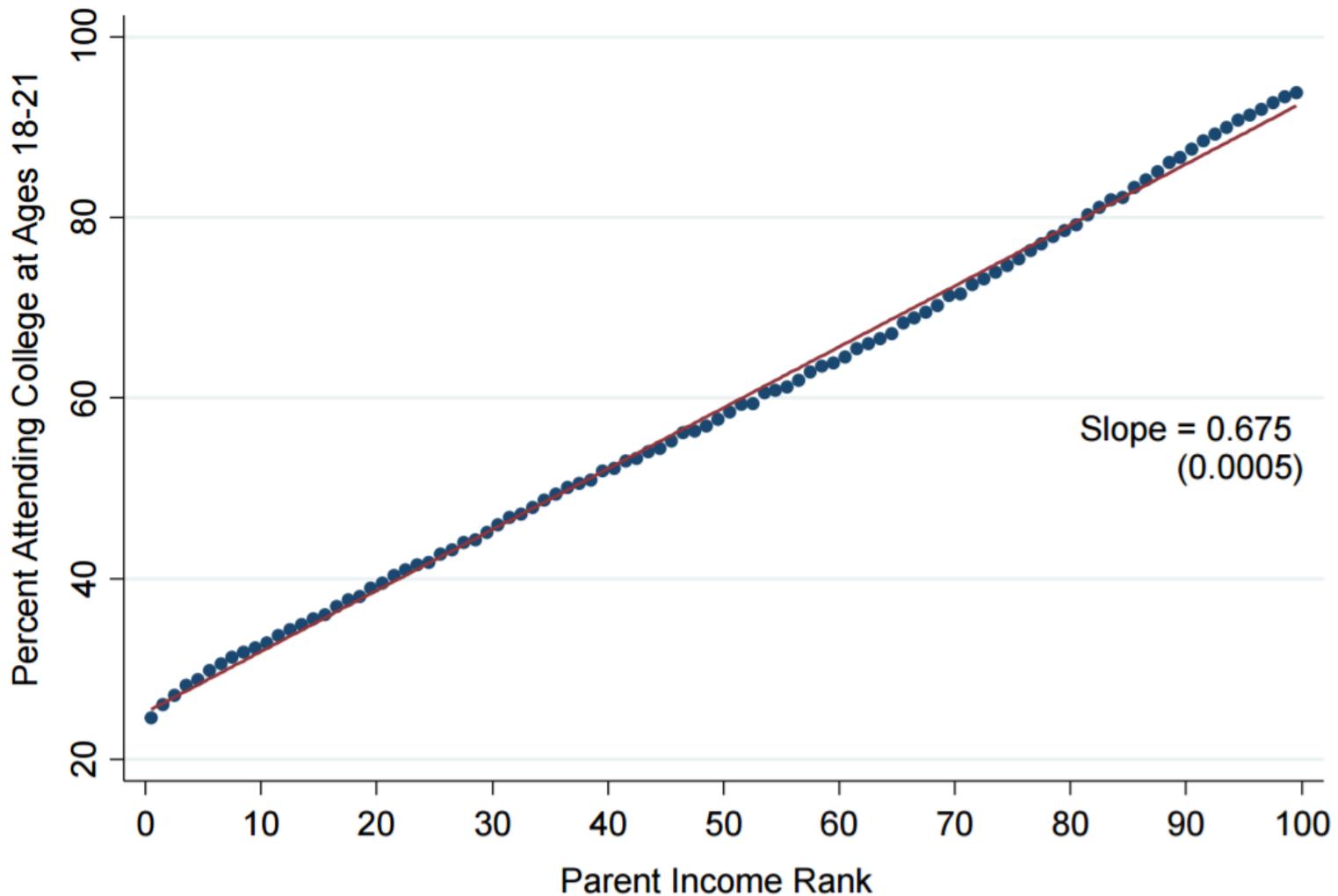
Intergenerational Education Mobility



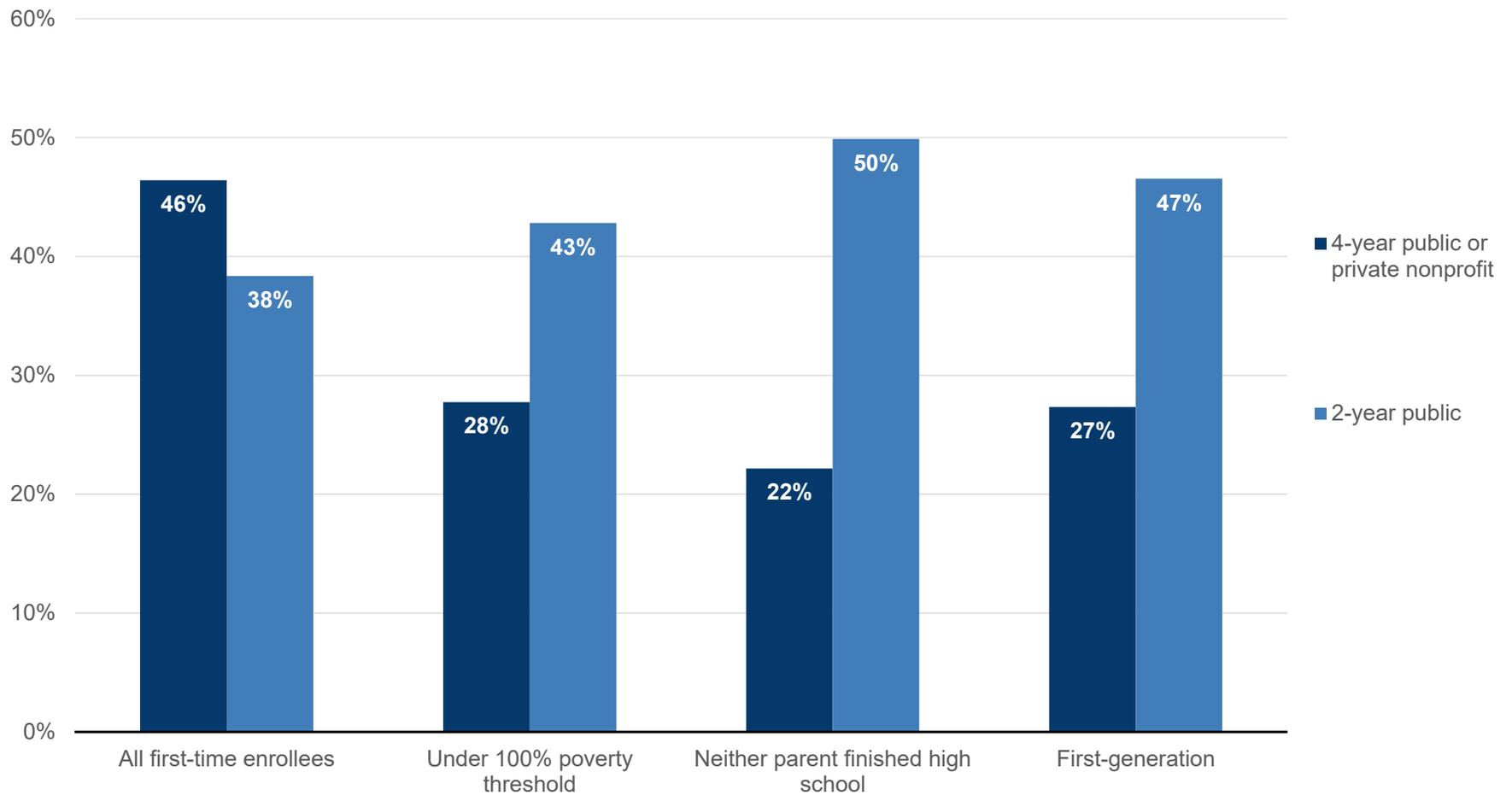
Source: Author's tabulations of PSID data.

Big Class Gaps in College Going

College Attendance Rates vs. Parent Income Rank in the U.S.



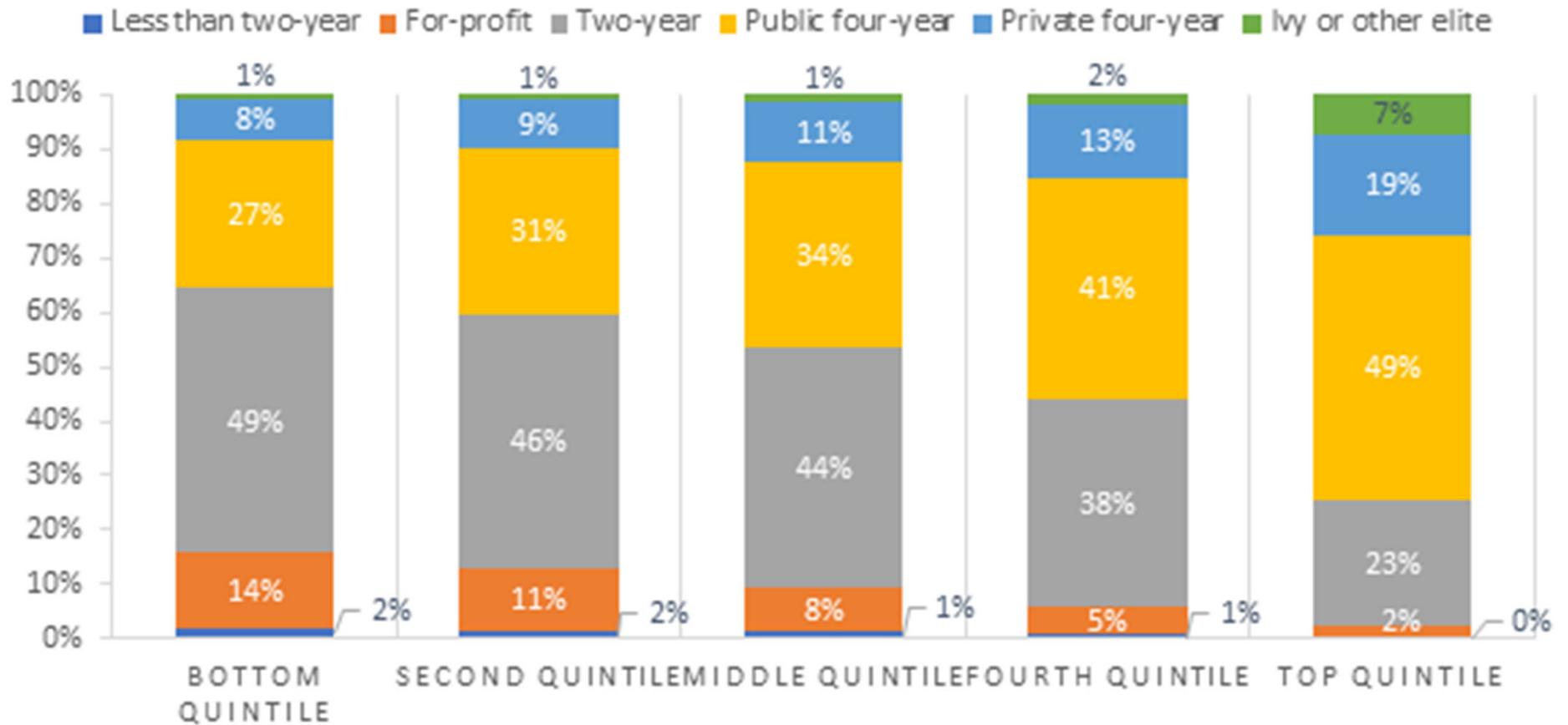
Community Colleges: serving those in need



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2011-12 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, First Follow-up (BPS:12/14).

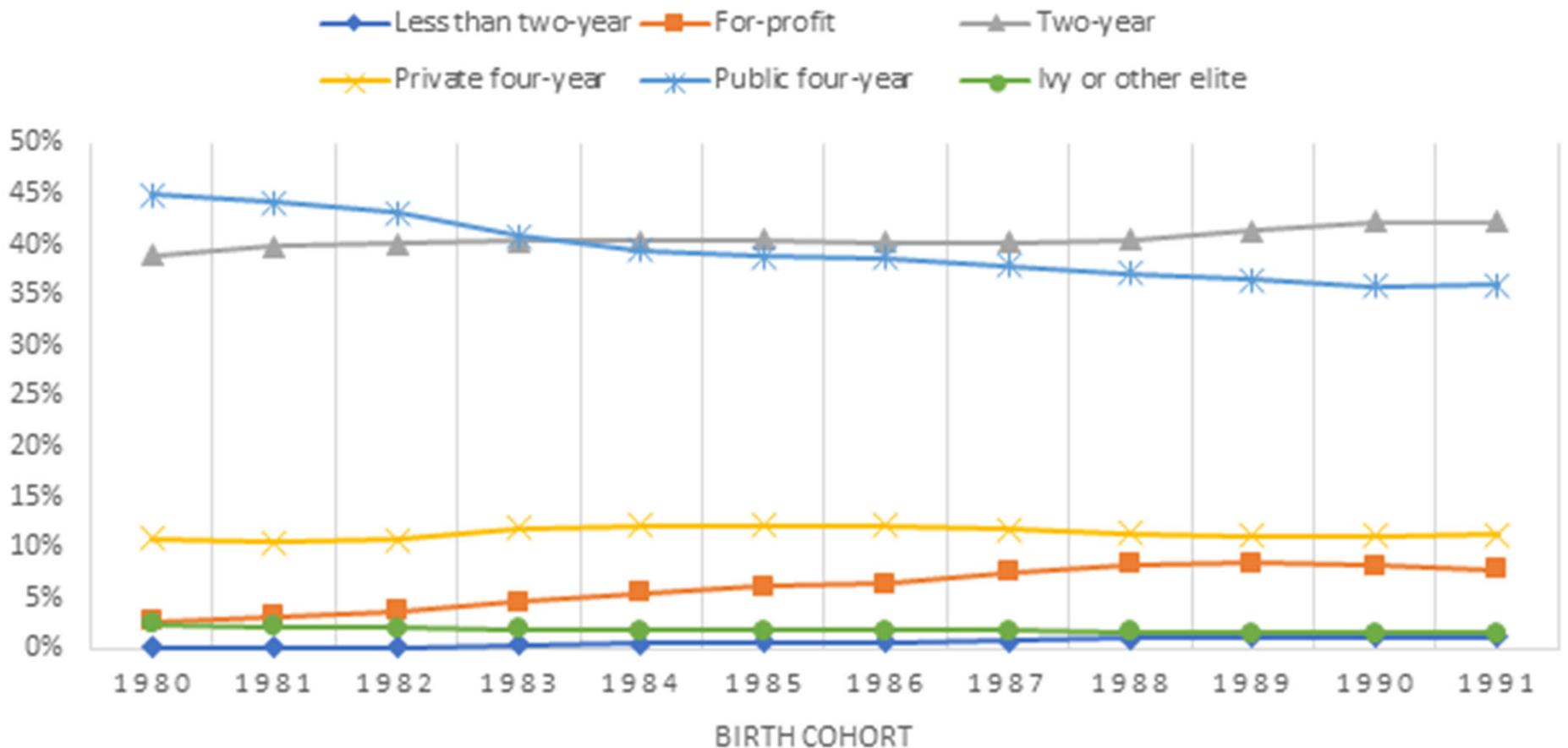
Community college for the middle class

WHERE DOES EACH QUINTILE GO TO COLLEGE? CHETTY DATA, 1991 COHORT

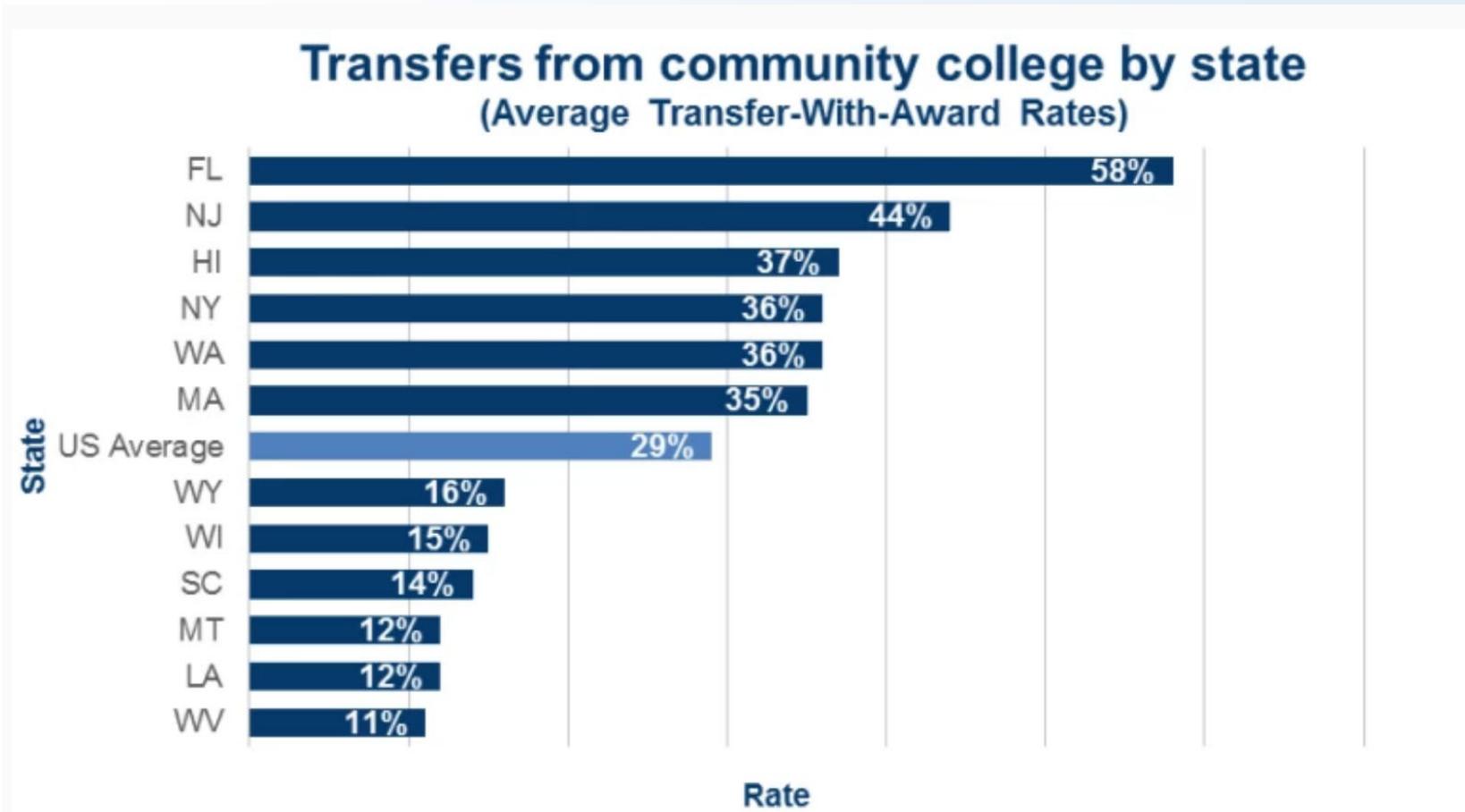


Increasingly so over time..

WHERE DO THE MIDDLE CLASS GO TO COLLEGE?
CHETTY DATA, 1991 COHORT



Transfer rates vary by state



Source: David Jenkins and John Fink. "Tracking Transfer: New Measures of Institutional and State Effectiveness in Helping Community College Students Attain Bachelor's Degrees." January 2016. Available at <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/tracking-transfer-institutional-state-effectiveness.html>.

***THE RISE
OF THE
MERITOCRACY***

Michael Young

With a new introduction by the author

Williams' Warrior Society



Williams' Warrior Society

“The reformers protest that equality of opportunity has not really been achieved; the wealthy reply that in fact it has, and that the poor now have the **opportunity of becoming warriors** - it is just bad luck that their characteristics are such that they do not pass the test. **‘We are not’**, they might say, **‘excluding anyone for being poor, we exclude people for being weak, and it is unfortunate that those who are poor are also weak’.**” – *Bernard Williams*

America's Test-Taker Society

“The reformers protest that equality of opportunity has not really been achieved; the wealthy reply that in fact it has, and that the poor now have the **opportunity of getting good college educations** - it is just bad luck that their characteristics are such that they do not pass the test. **‘We are not’**, they might say, **‘excluding anyone for being poor, we exclude people for being dumb, and it is unfortunate that those who are poor are also dumb’**.” – *Bernard Williams (adapted!)*

Conclusions

- Higher education can act to magnify or mitigate class inequality
- Community colleges are vital for upward mobility into the middle class
- Improving flexibility and movement within the system is vital
- The myth of meritocracy is dampening efforts for equitable reform

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