

Disparities in Radiation Therapy...

- Reviewed Medicare Data from 2003 for women with early stage breast cancer
- 37,305 women had lumpectomy
 - 34,024 White
 - 2,305 Black

There are Disparities in Radiation Therapy...

Standard of Care Radiation after lumpectomy received by...

74% of white women

65% of black women

There are Disparities in Radiation Therapy...

Pacific West	<u>72%</u> white vs <u>55%</u> black
East South Central	<u>72%</u> white vs <u>57%</u> black
Northeast	<u>70%</u> white vs <u>58%</u> black

Mountain West	76% white vs. 74% black
North Central Midwest	74% white vs. 72% black

What factors contribute to treatment disparities in breast cancer?



COMMUNICATION



PATIENT-DOCTOR RELATIONSHIP

Health Care Experiences of African American Teen Women in Eastern North Carolina

- Four focus groups of 44 teen women in 3 counties in Eastern NC (38 AA)
- Discussed themes of health
 - Communication with physicians
 - Good and Bad physician visits

Health Care Experiences of African American Teen Women in Eastern North Carolina

- **Communication** – If they questioned the physician, they often received a response that they did not understand.

Health Care Experiences of African American Teen Women in Eastern North Carolina

■ **BAD physician visits**

- Being scared
- Waiting a long time
- Not understanding the physician
- Receiving care from a resident or student who is not well trained

■ **GOOD physician visits**

- Doctor demonstrated self breast exams
- Doctor explained what he/she was doing during the visit
- Everyone in the office is happy to see you [the patient]

Cancer Communication Patterns are influenced by patient characteristics

- Observed 14 practices with 58 oncologists
- Audiotaped the initial office consultation for 405 newly diagnosed women with breast cancer
- Detailed communication analysis.

Cancer Communication Patterns are influenced by patient characteristics

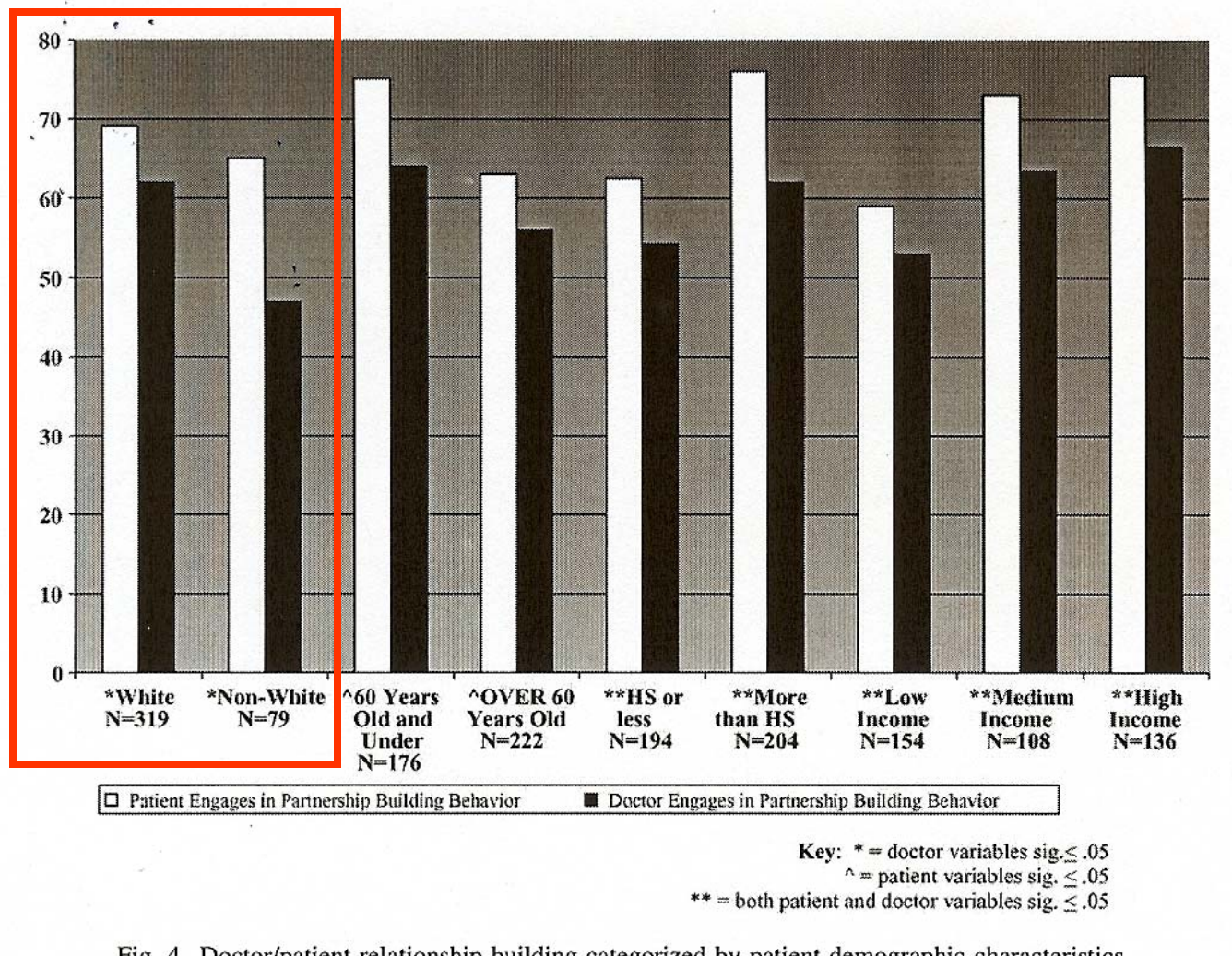


Fig. 4. Doctor/patient relationship building categorized by patient demographic characteristics

Cancer Communication Patterns are influenced by patient characteristics

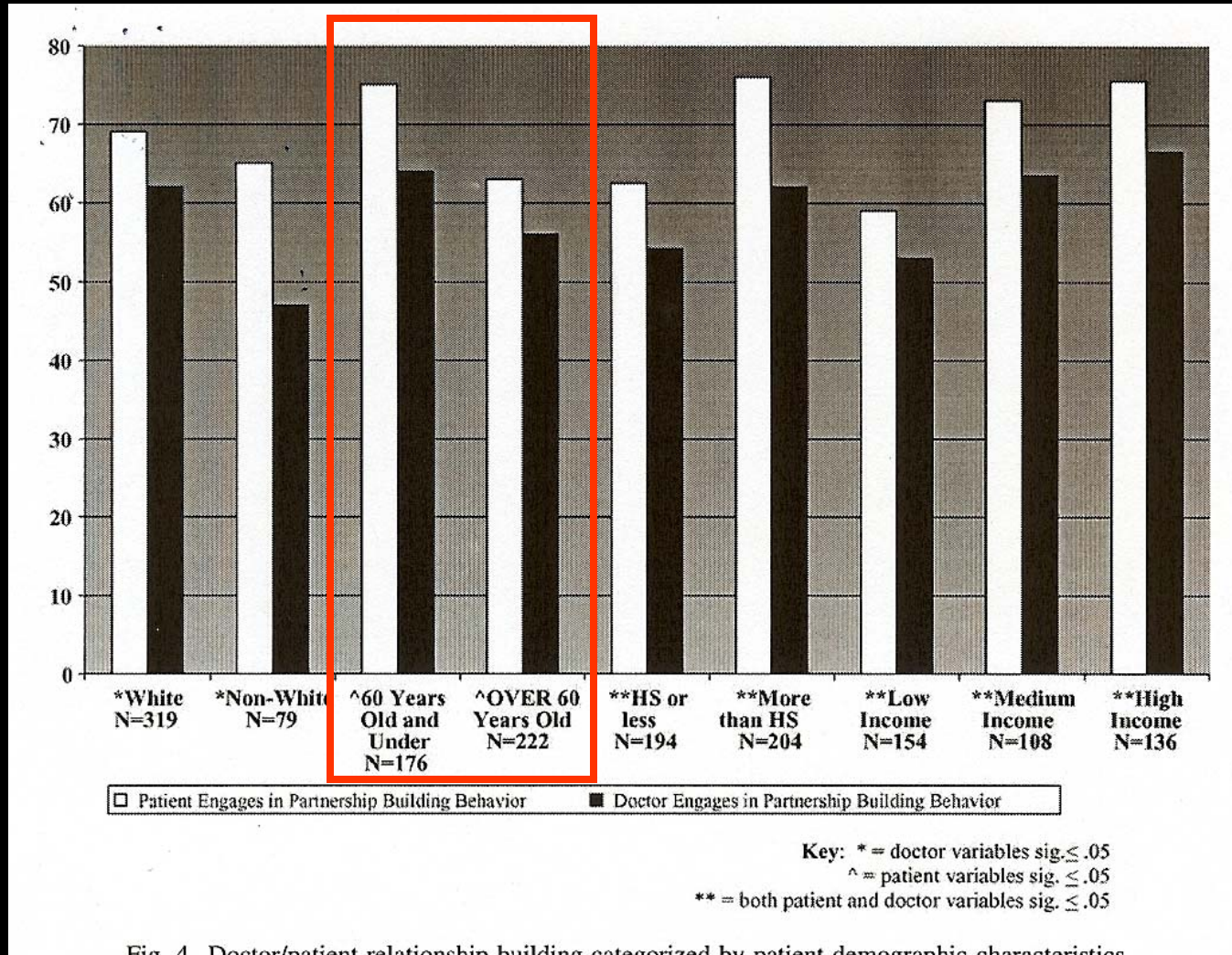


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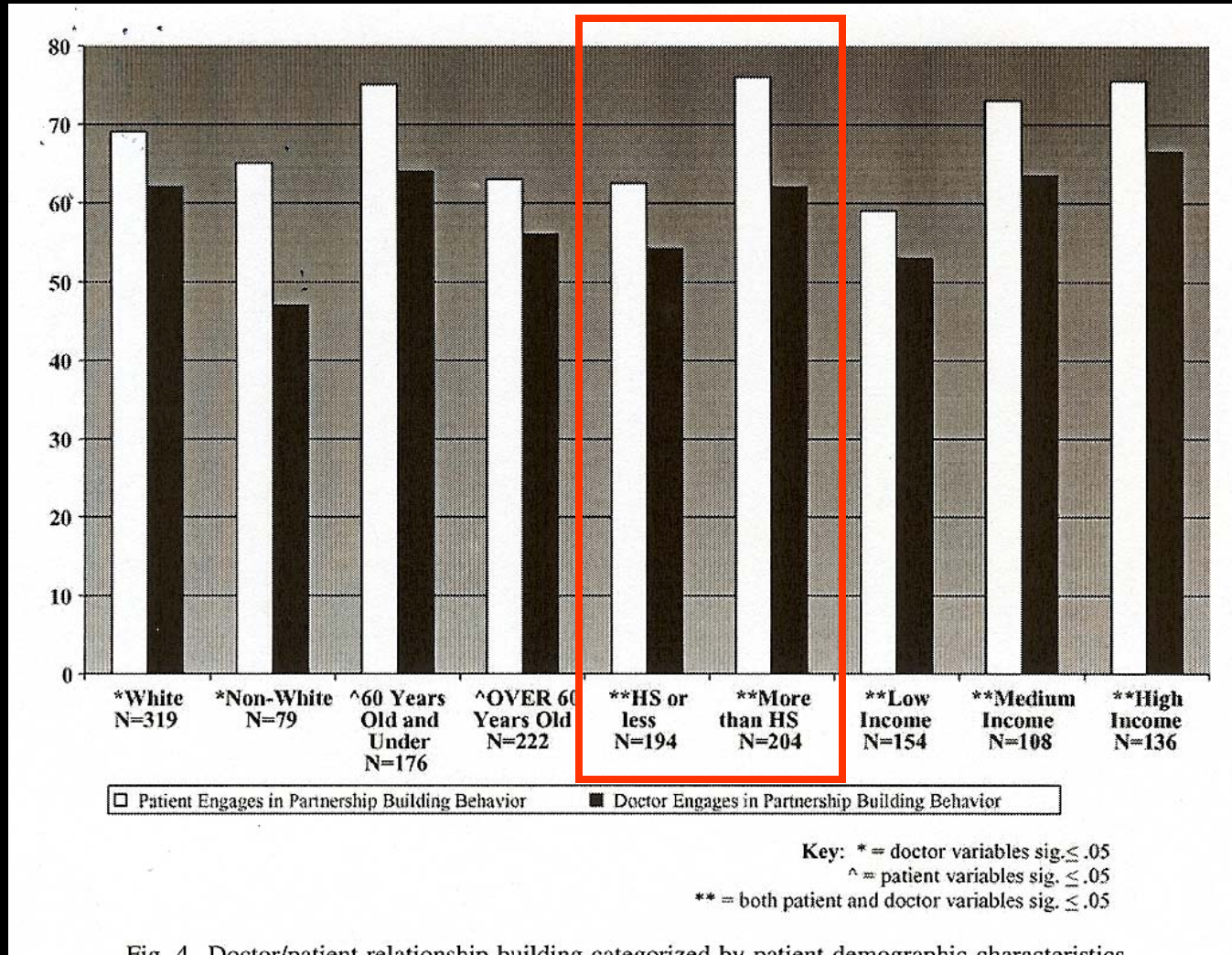


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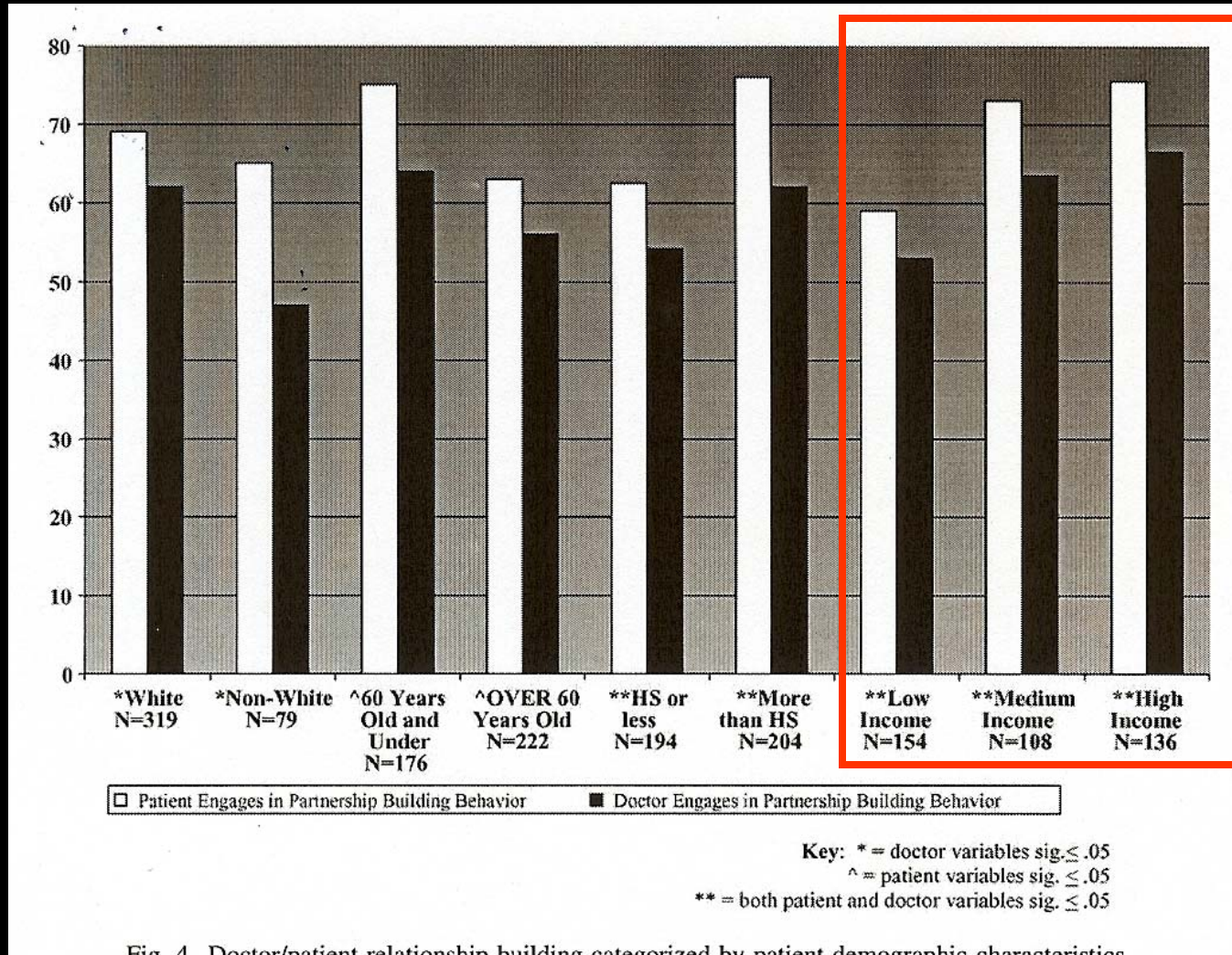


Fig. 4. Doctor/patient relationship building categorized by patient demographic characteristics

Looking toward the future...

**How do we better
Understand and
SOLVE treatment
disparities in breast
cancer?**

University Cancer Research Fund

CAROLINA
BREAST
CANCER
STUDY

Carolina Breast Cancer Study: Case-Control Study in North Carolina



Information obtained

In-person interviews.

Blood samples (DNA).

Medical records.

Formalin-fixed, paraffin-embedded tumor blocks.

Phase III – Carolina Breast Cancer Study



Jeanne Lucas Study

Summary



- There are racial disparities for breast cancer treatment.
- There are surgical treatment disparities in the use of breast recon and sentinel lymph node technology.
- Improving communication and patient doctor relationships may be a means of decreasing disparities in treatment decision making and clinical trial accrual.