

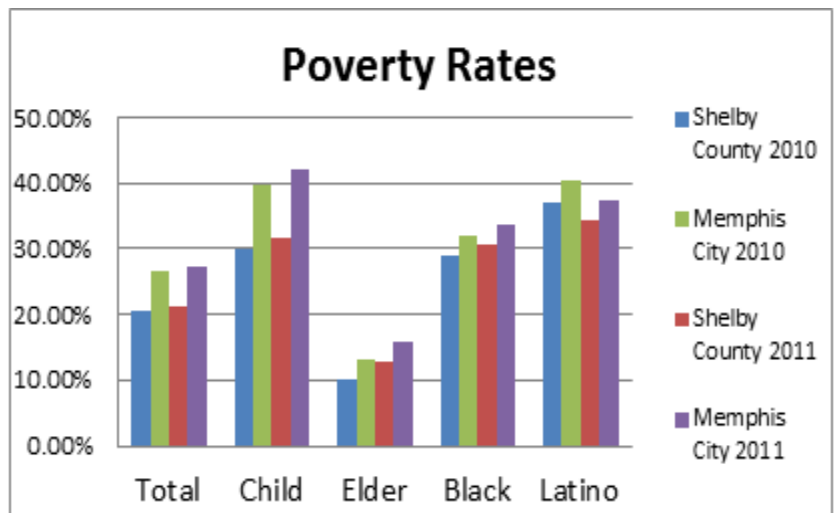
2012 Memphis Poverty Fact Sheet

Who are the Poor?

Memphis has a poverty rate of 27.20%. Child poverty is 42.10%, while poverty rates for people over age 65 are the lowest. Poverty rates for African Americans are 33.70%, and 37.40% of Latinos are poor, while 12.60% of the poor are Caucasian.

The Working Poor

In Shelby County, 50.10% of those under poverty worked full or part time during the previous month. In the City of Memphis, the percentage of working poor is 49.30%



Female-Headed Households

Single motherhood is a strong predictor of poverty. In Memphis, 47.00% of all female-headed households are poor; while in Shelby County, 43.00% of female-headed households have incomes under the poverty threshold. This is troubling because 62.50% of the births in the City of Memphis and 57.10% of the births in Shelby County are to single mothers.

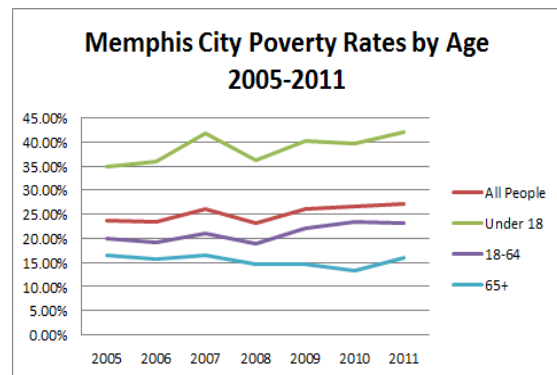
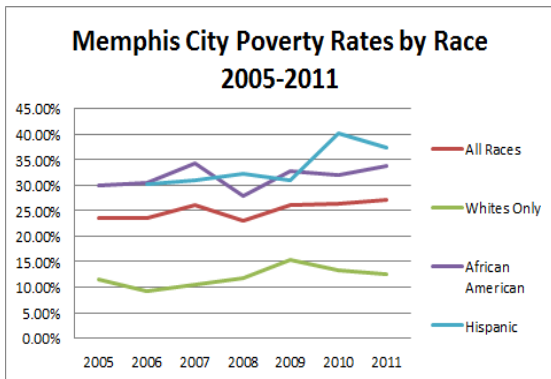
Percentage of Female-Headed Households Under the Poverty Threshold		
	Memphis, TN	Shelby County
Overall	47.00%	43.00%
White Alone	40.40%	27.50%
African American	47.10%	45.00%
Latino	57.10%	58.70%

How Does Memphis Rank with other Cities?

Memphis has the second highest poverty rate among cities with more than one million people. If cities with more than 500,000 inhabitants are included, Memphis falls to fifth place. Memphis has the third highest child poverty rate for cities with populations over 500,000 people. However, while Memphis’s ranking improved over its 2011 ranking, this does not indicate lower poverty rates for Memphis (child poverty rates increased), but rather that child poverty rates have increased at a faster rate in other cities.

Trends in Poverty Rates

Since 2005, poverty rates in Memphis have tended to rise. The economic crisis of 2008 resulted in increased poverty rates for all racial and age groups, but poverty rates for Whites only have decreased since 2009, whereas poverty rates for African Americans and Latinos (Hispanics) have remained high. Note also that poverty rates among people over age 65 tend to be much lower than for the rest of the population. This is attributed to Social Security.



The Relationship between Poverty and Race

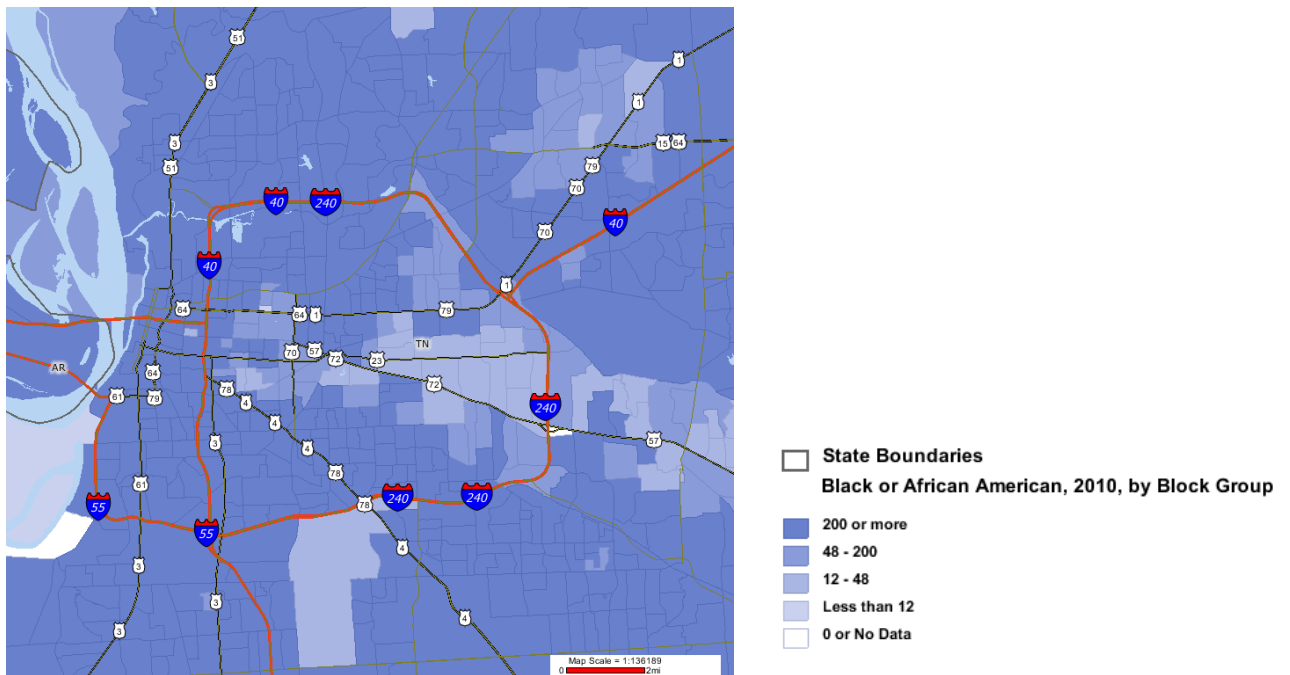
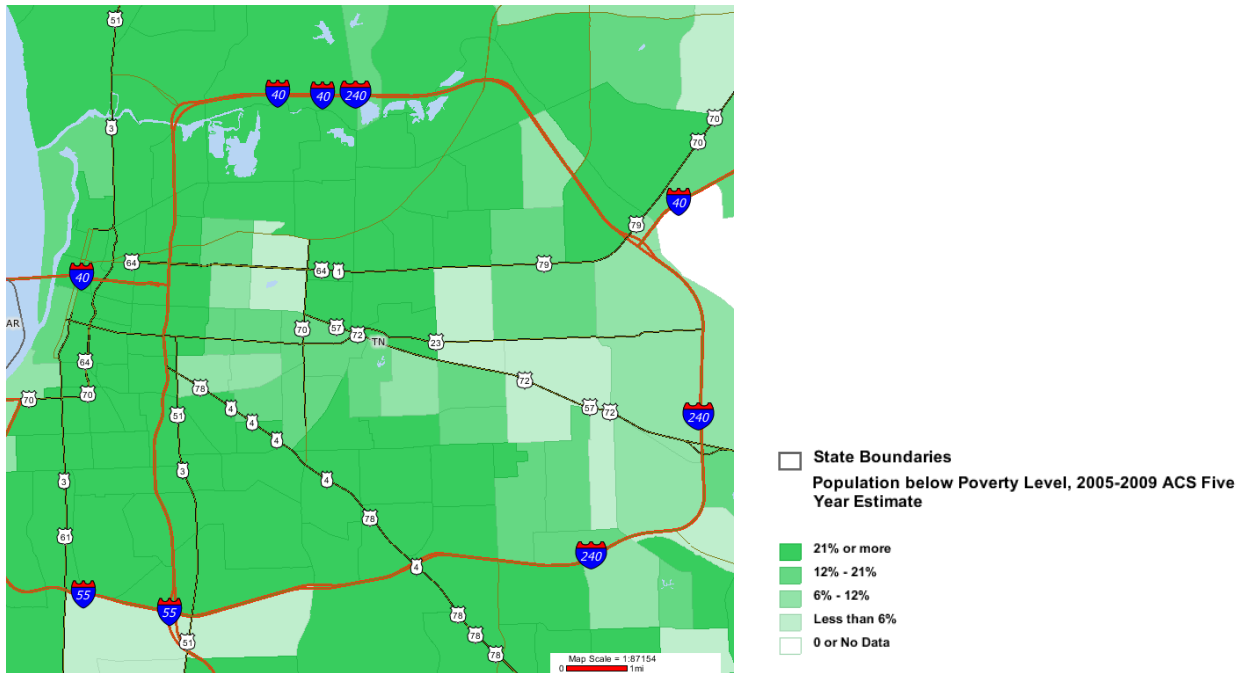
The poor in Memphis tend to be minorities. The poverty rates for African Americans and Hispanics are higher than the overall poverty rate, and poverty rates for minorities are higher in every age category than poverty rates for Caucasians:

	All Ages	Under 18	18-64	65+
All Races	27.20%	42.10%	23.20%	16.00%
Caucasian Alone	12.60%	15.30%	13.00%	8.20%
African American	33.70%	49.20%	28.10%	24.10%
Hispanic	36.40%	45.80%	31.30%	20.60%

Children in Memphis City Schools Who Are “Economically Disadvantaged”

According to the 2012 report card from the Tennessee Department of Education, 85.1% of the children attending Memphis City Schools are economically disadvantaged, and 82.7% are African American. The picture in Shelby County Independent School District is different, yet it mirrors the same trend: 38.6% of children attending Shelby County schools are economically disadvantaged, and the African American population is 37.4%.

A map of the City of Memphis and Shelby County shows that the areas of high poverty are also the areas where minorities are concentrated:



The Department of Social Work in the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy at the University of Memphis is dedicated to understanding poverty and its causes through research and engaged scholarship. Our purpose is to identify the most effective ways to eliminate poverty and promote social and economic development for our region. If you would like more information on Memphis poverty, please contact Dr. Elena Delavega at mdlavega@memphis.edu

Sources:

Data obtained from the US Bureau of the Census, November 29, 2012
 All Data except Hispanic: 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2009, & 2011 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (US Bureau of the Census)
 Hispanic Data: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, & 2011 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates (US Bureau of the Census).