SECTION III

Child Poverty (ages 0-17)

We now shift our attention from total (all ages) poverty to poverty among the Appalachian child (ages 0-17) population. Child poverty is an important indicator of overall child well being. Although many factors put children at risk, nothing predicts bad outcomes for a child more powerfully than growing up poor. Children who spend their early years in poverty often suffer negative health, social and cognitive outcomes and are much more likely to be poor as adults. Child poverty is a particularly persistent condition for minority children, whereas white children are more likely to live in poverty for a relatively shorter time. Of great concern is the increasing number of poor children in the U.S. during the last couple decades. In 1974, 10 million American children lived below the poverty line; by 1994 the number had risen to over 15 million. This represents an increase from 15 percent to 22 percent of all children, a poverty rate that is among the highest in the developed world. Child poverty in Appalachia increased slightly between 1989 and 1995, following the national pattern. In particular, young children in Appalachia have experienced the greatest increases in poverty, compared with to older children and the general population.

Changes in Child Poverty, 1989-1995

Child poverty followed a pattern similar to that of overall poverty in Appalachia and the United States, with increases between 1989 and 1993, followed by declines between 1993 and 1995. However, child poverty in *non*-Appalachian counties in the U.S. increased significantly more between 1989 and 1993. Still, the absolute *level* of child poverty was slightly higher in Appalachian counties than in non-Appalachian counties (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1:
Poverty rate for children age 0-17 years, Appalachian Counties and U.S. Counties outside of Appalachia

	1989 SAIPE	1989 Census	1993 SAIPE	1995 SAIPE
Appalachian counties	20.5%	20.1%	23.3%	21.6%
U.S. Counties outside of Appalachia	19.6%	18.1%	22.6%	20.7%
Total	**19.6%**	**18.3%**	**22.7%**	**20.8%**

Figure 3.1:
Child Poverty (ages 0-17),
ARC Counties, 1989 (Census)

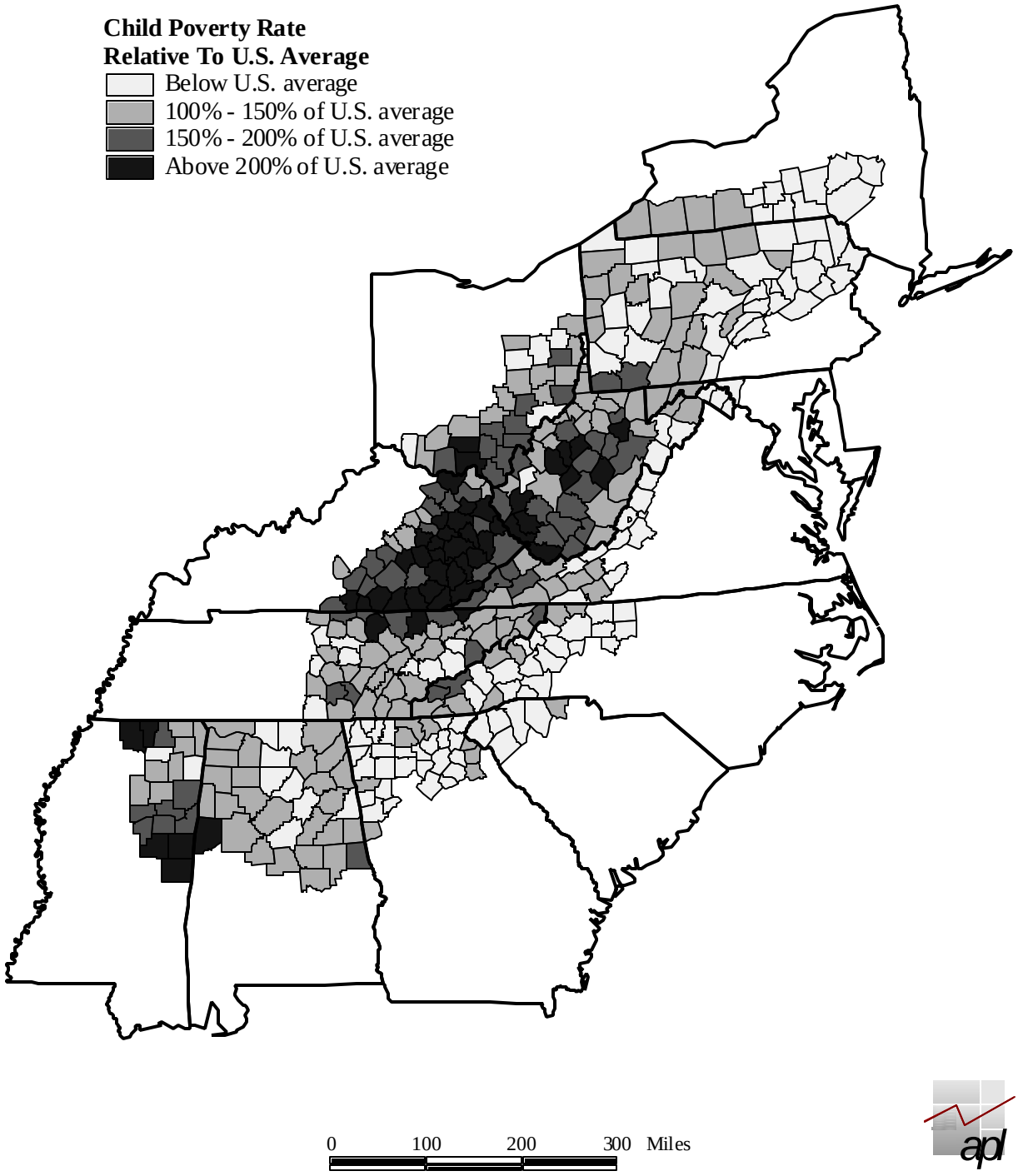

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Figure 3.2:
Child Poverty (ages 0-17),
ARC Counties, 1993 (SAIPE)

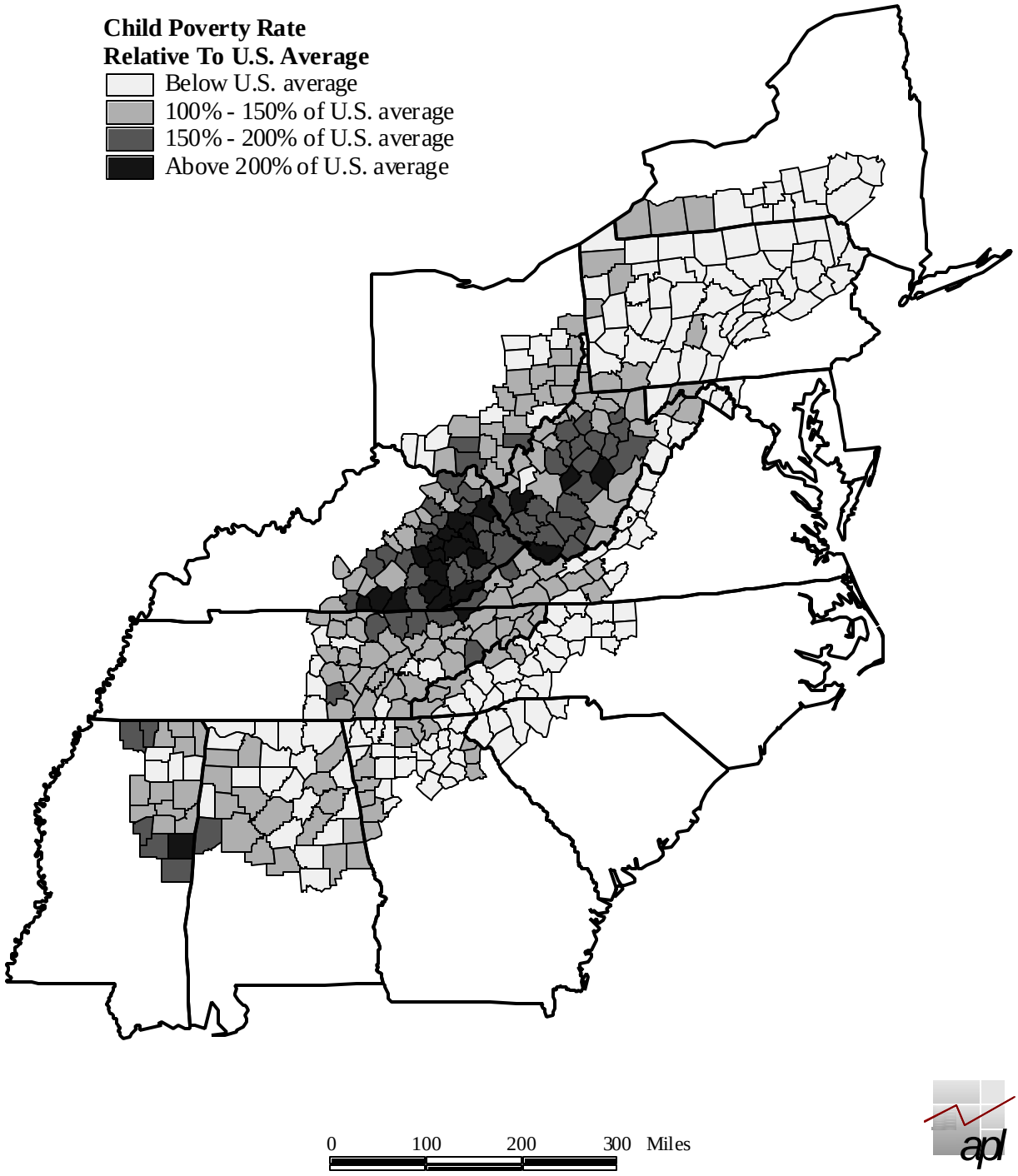

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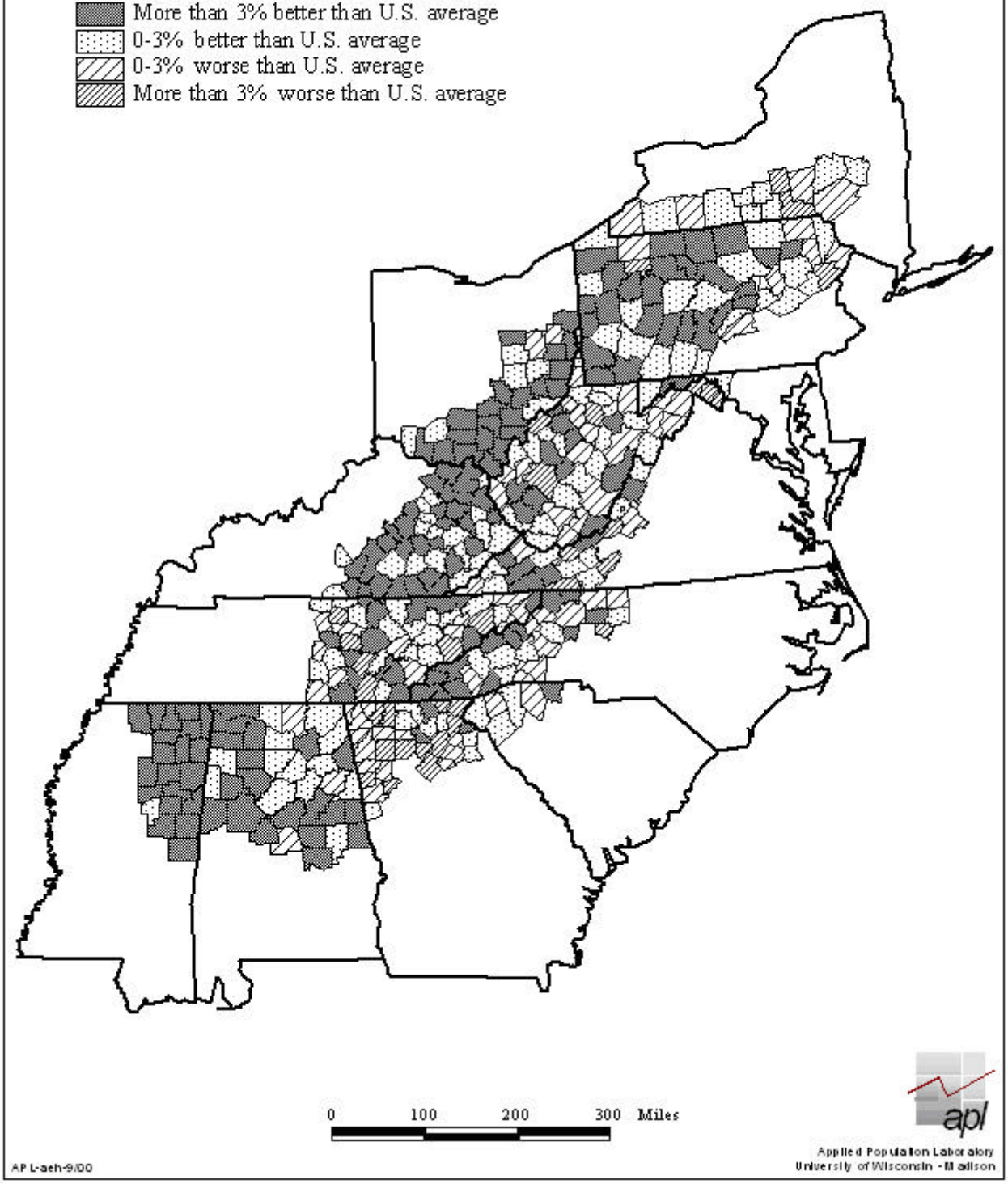
Figure 3.3:
Change in Child Poverty (ages 0-17), ARC Counties, 1989-1993



Figures 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 display the geographical distribution of child poverty (0-17 year olds) among Appalachian counties for the years 1989 (Census) and 1993. As we might expect, counties that experienced higher *total* poverty rates, also experienced higher *child* poverty rates. While the maps of total poverty and child poverty are not identical, it is apparent that the patterns are overwhelmingly similar. The counties with higher rates of child poverty in 1989 were noticeably concentrated in eastern Kentucky, and significant portions of northern Tennessee, West Virginia, southern Ohio, and Mississippi. The geographic pattern of child poverty also shifted between 1989 and 1993, in a similar pattern to the shifts for total poverty.

The geographical distribution of SAIPE child poverty rates across Appalachia in 1993 (Figure 3.2) is quite similar to the 1989 distribution, particularly the concentration in eastern Kentucky and West Virginia.

Figure 3.3 allows us to examine changes in child poverty rates between 1989 (1990 Census) and the 1993 SAIP estimate more closely. For example, although both Figure 3.1 and 3.2 indicate that eastern Kentucky had relatively high concentrations of child poverty in both time periods, change in all the ARC Kentucky counties was a fairly evenly distributed relative improvement. The dominance of black and white counties in Figure 3.3 indicates that between 1989 and 1993 Appalachia experienced a reduction in child poverty that was greater than the national average. The most significant relative increases in child poverty in Appalachia between 1989 and 1993 were in West Virginia, northern Georgia, Tennessee, and the southern tier of New York.

Again not surprisingly Appalachian child poverty in 1995 (Figure 3.4) was distributed similarly to total poverty, with higher child poverty counties clustered in eastern Kentucky and West Virginia. However, between 1993 and 1995 a considerable majority of ARC counties either did not decrease their child poverty rates as much as the U.S. averages, or *increased* their child poverty rates during the two-year period (Figure 3.5). During this period relative increases in child poverty were most expansive in Alabama, the Carolinas, and New York, followed by Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Mississippi, and Georgia. Only Ohio and Tennessee experienced fairly consistent relative declines in child poverty during the period. Finally, Figure 3.6 examines change in child poverty between the 1990 Census and the 1995 SAIP estimate

Figure 3.4:
Child Poverty (ages 0-17),
ARC Counties, 1995 (SAIPE)

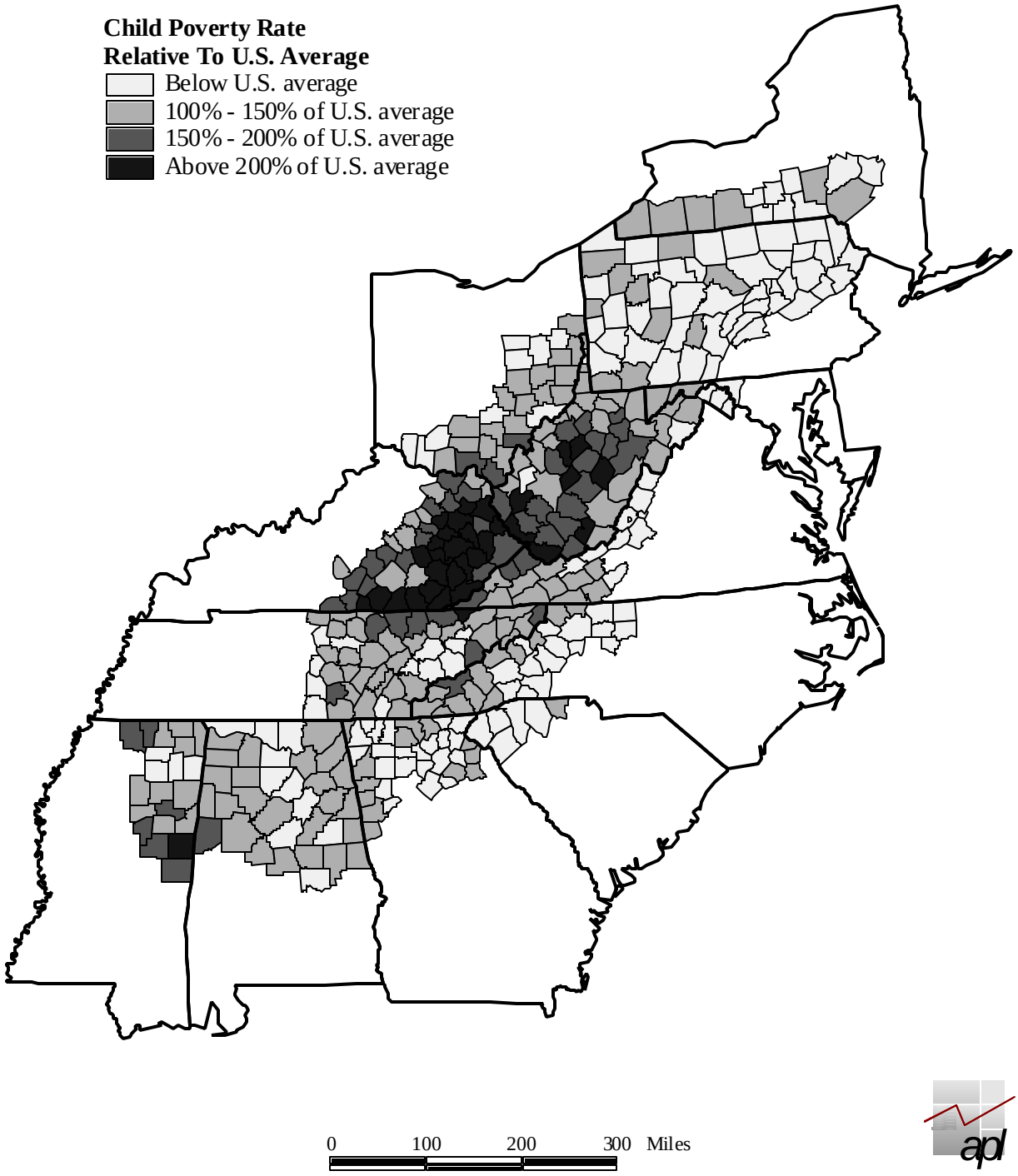


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Figure 3.5:
Change in Child Poverty (ages 0-17), ARC Counties, 1993-1995 (SAIPE)

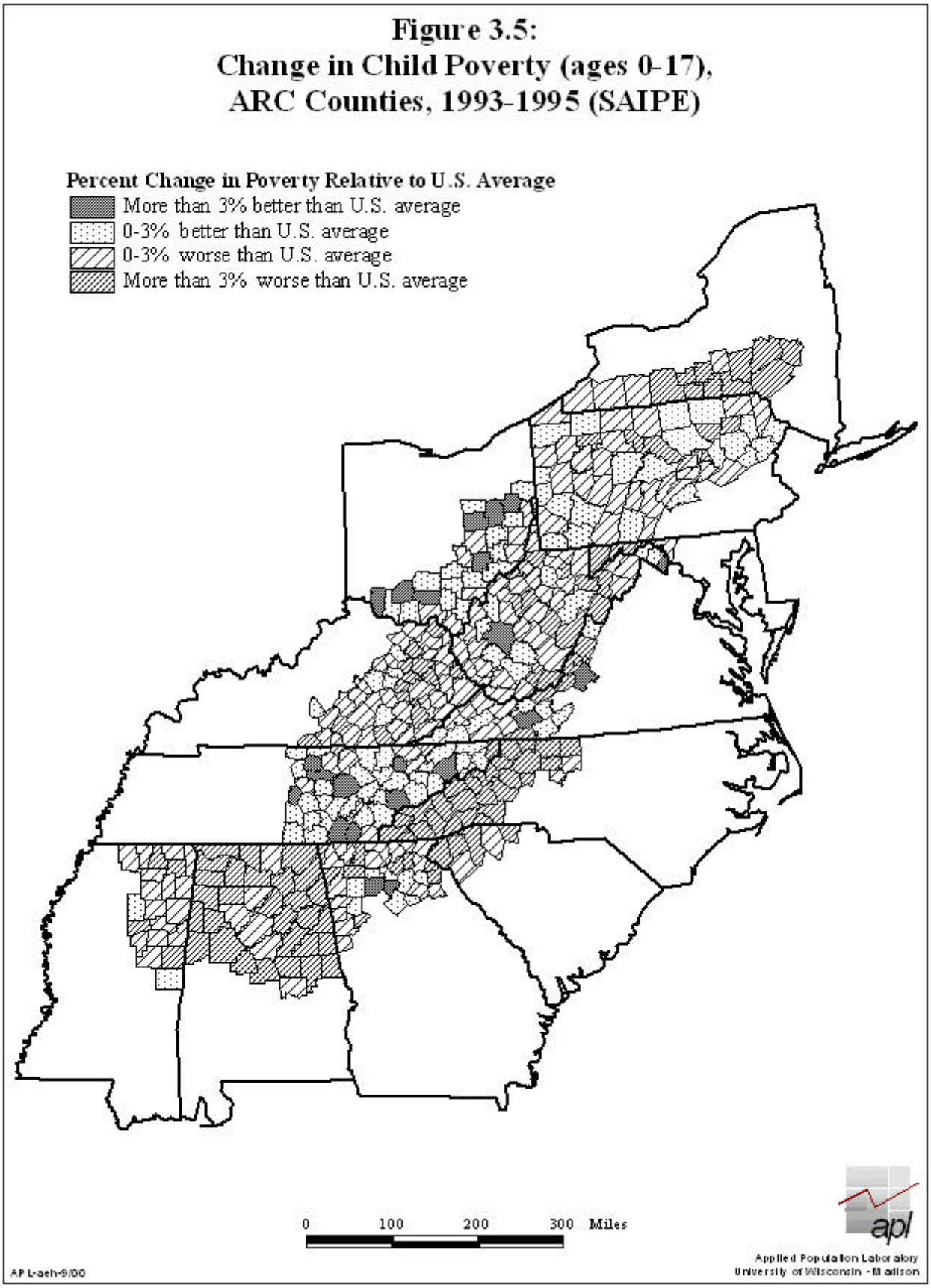
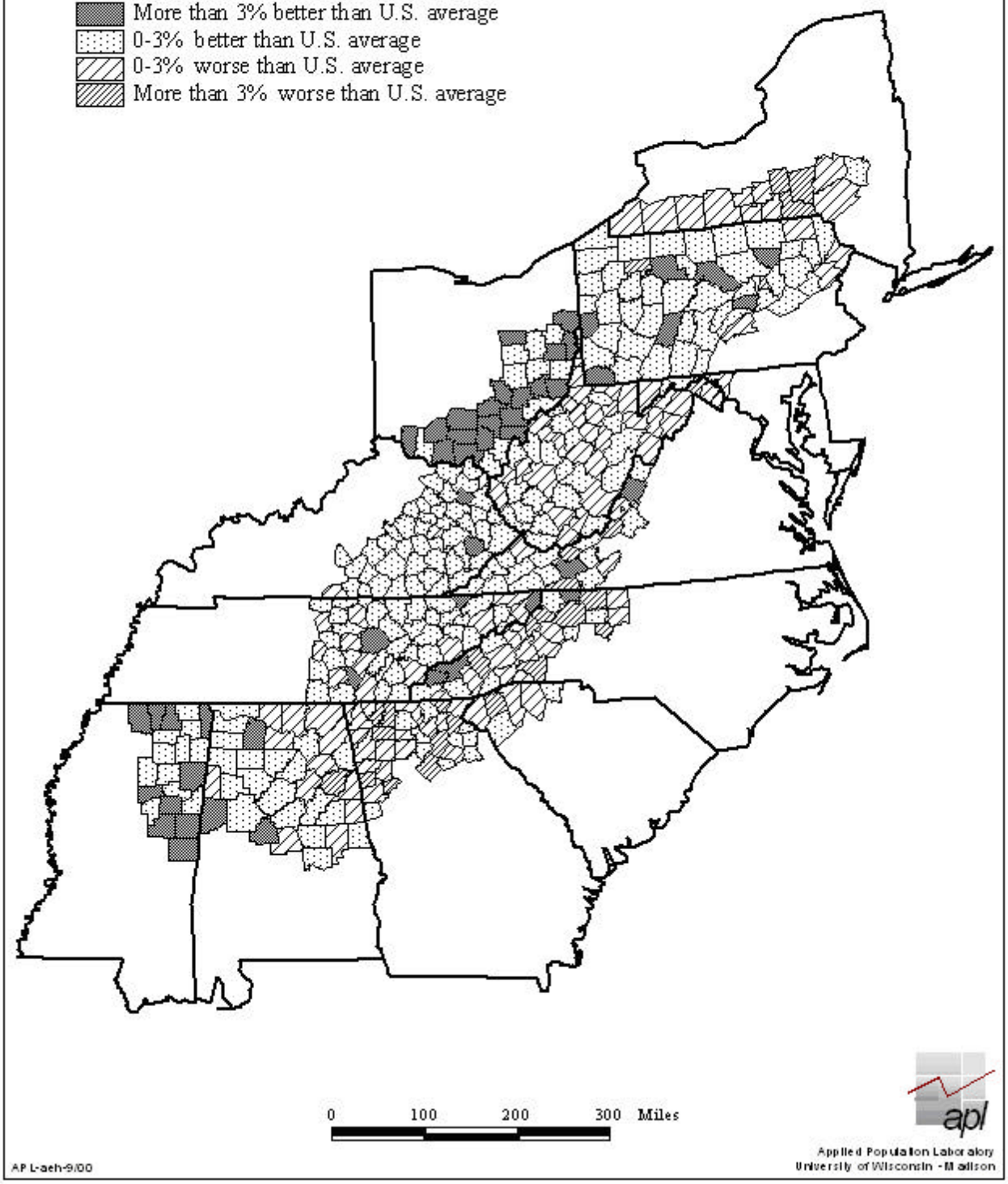


Figure 3.6:
Change in Child Poverty (ages 0-17), ARC Counties, 1989-1995



(1989-1995). The relative increases in child poverty experienced between 1989 and 1993 were tempered by the declines between 1993 and 1995. The most significant relative declines in child poverty between 1989 and 1995 were clustered in southern Ohio and Mississippi. Increases in child poverty over the six-year period were most notably clustered in the New York, West Virginia, northern Georgia and Alabama, and the western Carolinas. Many of these counties, however, still had relatively low child poverty rates in 1995.

Considering the Starting Level of Child Poverty and Subsequent Change

As discussed with our comparison of total poverty rate changes, comparison of changes in child poverty rates is more meaningful when the *relative* starting levels of county child poverty are taken into account. Therefore we examine the *Relative Child Poverty Position* of ARC counties for the most recent period, 1993-1995. Table 3.2 tabulates the 1993 poverty rates in Appalachian counties and the change in poverty between 1993 and 1995. The national benchmark for level of child poverty was 22.7 percent and the national change in the child poverty rate over the two years was a decrease of 4.2 percent. The percent of counties in Appalachia with higher than average child poverty rates was about 57 percent. A higher percentage of counties (69.7 percent) had child poverty rates that were either increasing, or decreasing less than the national average. The largest proportion of Appalachian counties (40.1 percent) fit into the Worst category with a higher than average starting level of child poverty in 1993, *and* a worse than average change in child poverty between 1993 and 1995. Only 13 percent were considered to be in the *Best Position* (low starting rates and better than average declines). As would be expected, compared to the U.S. as a whole (Table 3.3), Appalachia has a significantly greater proportion of its counties in the *Worst* position, and significantly fewer in the *Best* position.

Figure 3.7 examines the geographic distribution of the relative child poverty position among Appalachian counties between 1993 and 1995. As Table 3.2 above describes, over 40 percent of Appalachian counties were categorized as "worst" between 1993 and 1995. Those counties with high rates of child poverty in 1993 and worse than average change in the following two year period were clustered in eastern Kentucky, West Virginia, and in parts of Mississippi and Alabama. There were smaller clusters of these worst category counties in New York, Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia. Of the 13 percent of Appalachian counties that were categorized

Table 3.2:
Relative Child Poverty Position of Appalachian Counties, 1993-1995

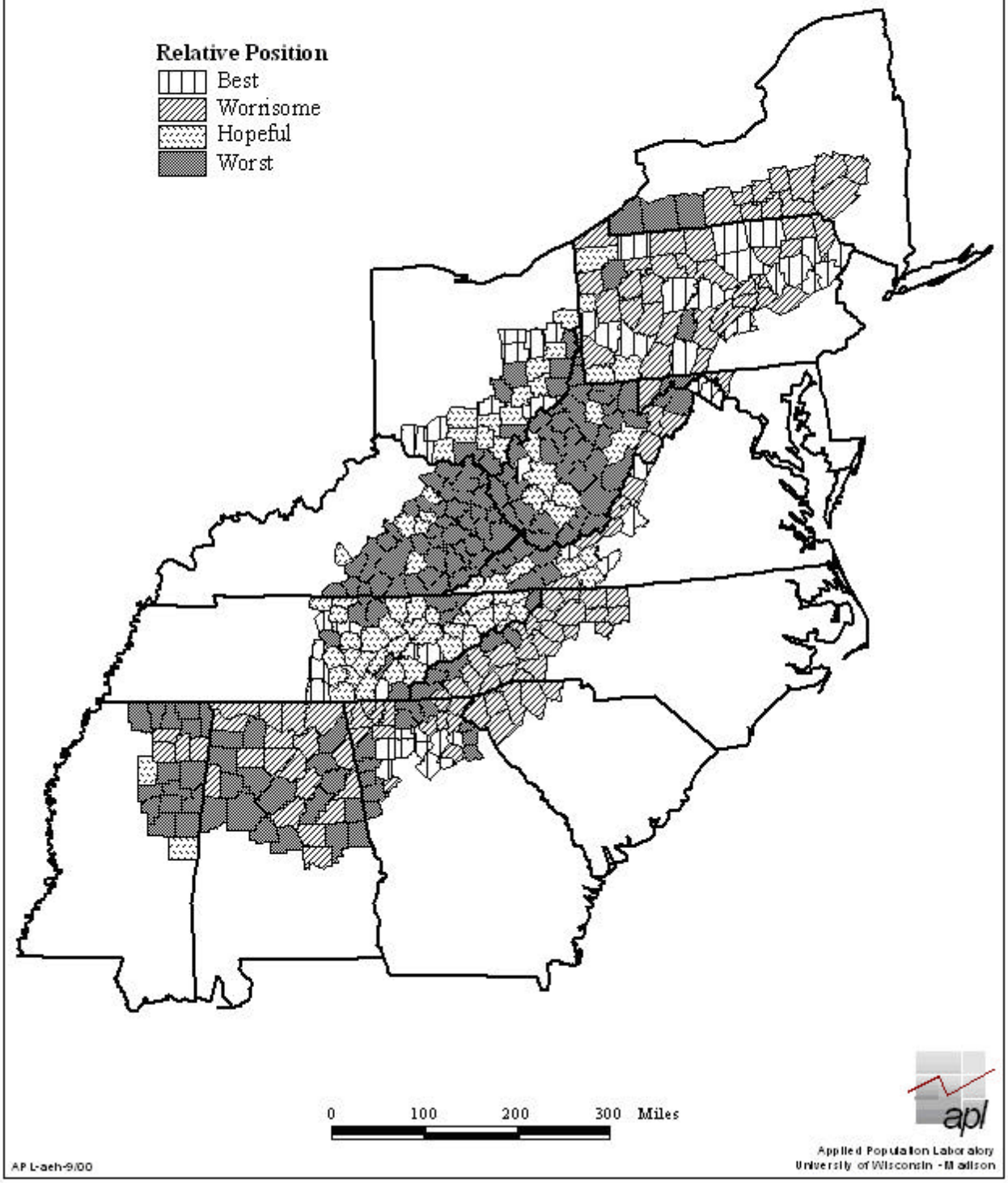
Level	Change in Child Poverty Rate Less Than U.S. (< -4.2%)	Change in Child Poverty Rate Greater Than U.S. (> -4.2%)	Total
Counties Below U.S. Child Poverty Rate in 1993 (< 22.7%)	***Best*** 52 13.0%	***Worrisome*** 118 29.6%	*170* ***42.6%***
Counties Above U.S. Child Poverty Rate in 1993 (> 22.7%)	***Hopeful*** 69 17.3%	***Worst*** 160 40.1%	*229* ***57.4%***
Total	*121* ***30.3%***	*278* ***69.7%***	*399* ***100%***

Table 3.3:
Relative Child Poverty Position of U.S. Counties, 1993-1995

Level	Change in Child Poverty Rate Less Than U.S. (< -4.2%)	Change in Child Poverty Rate Greater Than U.S. (> -4.2%)	Total
Counties Below U.S. Child Poverty Rate in 1993 (< 22.7%)	***Best*** 752 24.0%	***Worrisome*** 1,108 35.4%	*1,860* ***59.4%***
Counties Above U.S. Child Poverty Rate in 1993 (> 22.7%)	***Hopeful*** 254 8.1%	***Worst*** 1,018 32.5%	*1,272* ***40.6%***
Total	*1,006* ***32.1%***	*2,126* ***67.9%***	*3,132* ***100%***

as "best", there did not appear to be any significant geographic concentrations, except in the counties adjoining the Atlanta, Georgia, Cincinnati and Columbus, Ohio metropolitan areas, as well as the westernmost Appalachian counties in Tennessee along Interstate 65. Counties classified as "worrisome" seemed to follow a sickle-shaped pattern from New York and Pennsylvania south, along the western Virginia border, the western Carolina borders, into northern Georgia and Alabama. "Hopeful" counties, with above average child poverty but better than average change in child poverty, were predominantly located in Tennessee but also appeared in Ohio and West Virginia.

Figure 3.7:
Relative Child Poverty Position,
ARC Counties, 1993-1995 (SAIPE)



Child Poverty by Age Group (0-4 and 5-17)

While poverty certainly has negative consequences for the general population, considerable research has shown that poverty can be particularly detrimental to the development of very young children. Poverty rates for children ages 0-4 years were, and continue to be, considerably higher than for children ages 5-17 years both nationally and in Appalachia. This gap was even wider for Appalachian counties than for the remainder of the U.S., with 27.3 percent of children ages 0-4 in poverty, compared to 19.5 percent for children ages 5-17 in 1995.

Table 3.4:
Poverty rate for children ages 0-4, Appalachian Counties and U.S. Counties outside of Appalachia

	1989 SAIPE	1989 Census	1993 SAIPE	1995 SAIPE
Appalachian counties	24.9%	22.8%	28.7%	27.3%
U.S. counties outside of Appalachia	23.9%	19.9%	27.8%	25.5%
Total	**23.9%**	**20.1%**	**27.8%**	**25.7%**

Table 3.5:
Poverty rate for children ages 5-17, Appalachian Counties and U.S. Counties outside of Appalachia

	1989 SAIPE	1989 Census	1993 SAIPE	1995 SAIPE
Appalachian counties	18.7%	19.2%	21.1%	19.5%
U.S. counties outside of Appalachia	17.7%	17.4%	20.4%	18.7%
Total	**17.7%**	**17.5%**	**20.4%**	**18.7%**

In light of the markedly higher poverty rates in Appalachia for *young* children (aged 0-4), we focus on this age group in the following maps. In 1989, the spatial patterns for young child

poverty and total child poverty were similar among Appalachian counties (Figure 3.8). In 1993 (Figure 3.9) the geographic distribution of total child poverty and young child poverty were remarkably similar. Despite similarities in the spatial *patterns*, of child poverty, the actual *rates* of young child poverty were significantly higher in 1993 (see Tables 3.4 and 3.5, above).

Comparing change in young child poverty between 1989 and 1993 (Figure 3.10), with change in total child poverty over the same period (Figure 3.3), change in *young* child poverty was very similar relative to the U.S. average change. Only in Virginia did a recognizably greater number of counties experience on average significant increases in young child poverty compared to overall child poverty.

Figure 3.11 provides the geographic distribution of the 1995 SAIP estimates for young child poverty. Again, the higher than average (compared to U.S.) poverty counties were concentrated in eastern Kentucky and West Virginia. Between 1993 and 1995 different patterns emerged with regard to change in young child poverty (Figure 3.12). Compared to change in overall child poverty (Figure 3.5), a significant cluster of counties in eastern Kentucky, western Virginia, and in southern West Virginia performed much better than national average. Relatively poor performance between 1993 and 1995 was observed for Alabama, the western Carolinas, Pennsylvania, and New York.

Table 3.6 provides a breakdown of child poverty rates for the three sub-regions of Appalachia. Similar to the overall poverty rates for the sub-regions, the Central sub-region continued to experience the highest child poverty rates within Appalachia. According to the 1995 estimates, more than one-third of the children who lived in the Central sub-region lived in households with incomes under the poverty line, with the other three regions ranging from 20.1 percent to 21.6 percent.

Table 3.6:
Poverty rate for children age 0-17 years, by region within Appalachia

	Number of counties	1989 SAIPE	1989 Census	1993 SAIPE	1995 SAIPE
Northern	144	18.6%	19.2%	22.2%	20.3%
Southern	177	18.3%	18.1%	21.3%	20.1%
Central	85	37.6%	32.9%	37.2%	34.7%
Appalachia	**406**	**20.5%**	**20.1%**	**23.3%**	**21.6%**

Figure 3.8:
Young Child Poverty (ages 0-4),
ARC Counties, 1989 (Census)

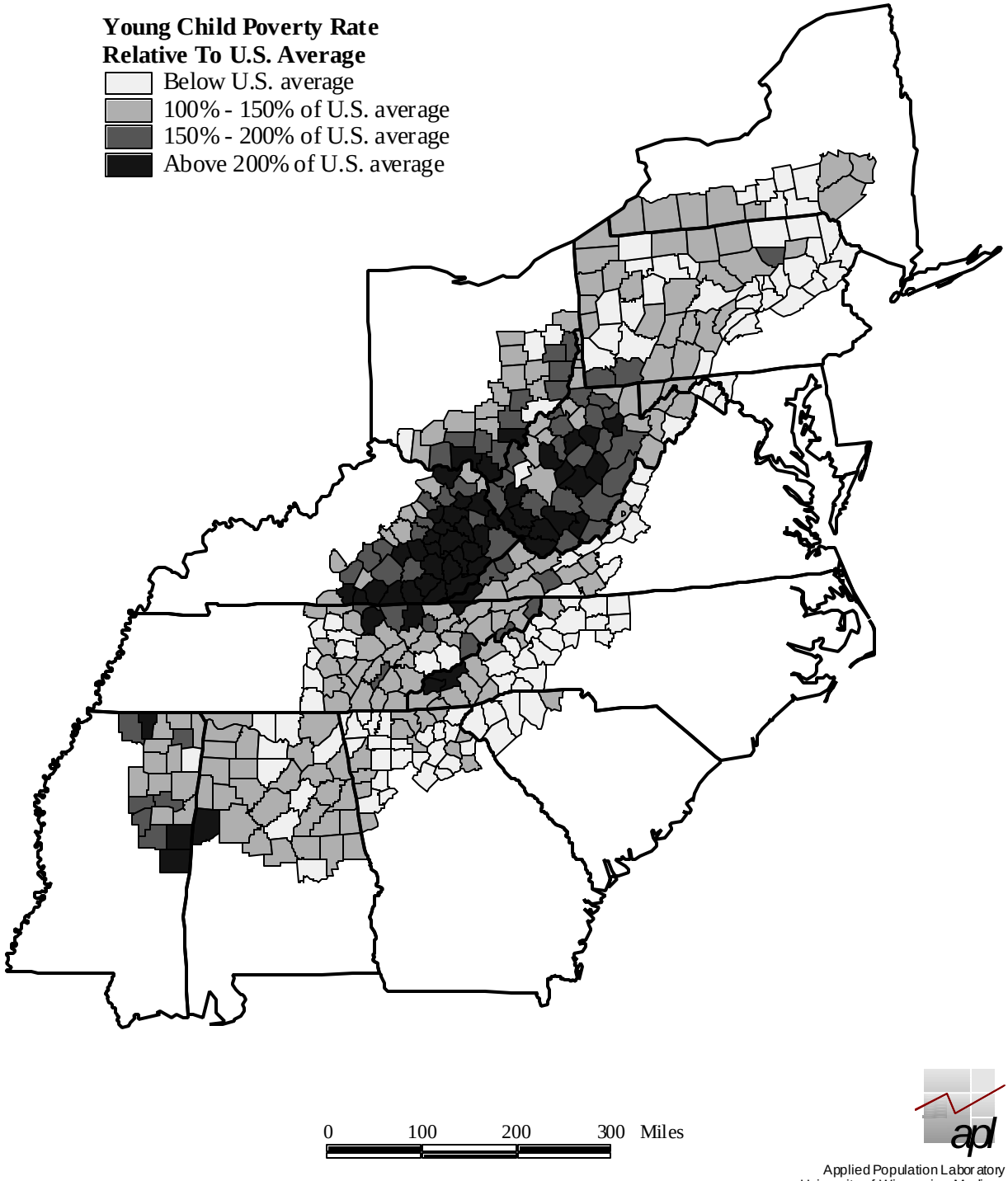


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Figure 3.9:
Young Child Poverty (ages 0-4), ARC Counties, 1993 (SAIPE)

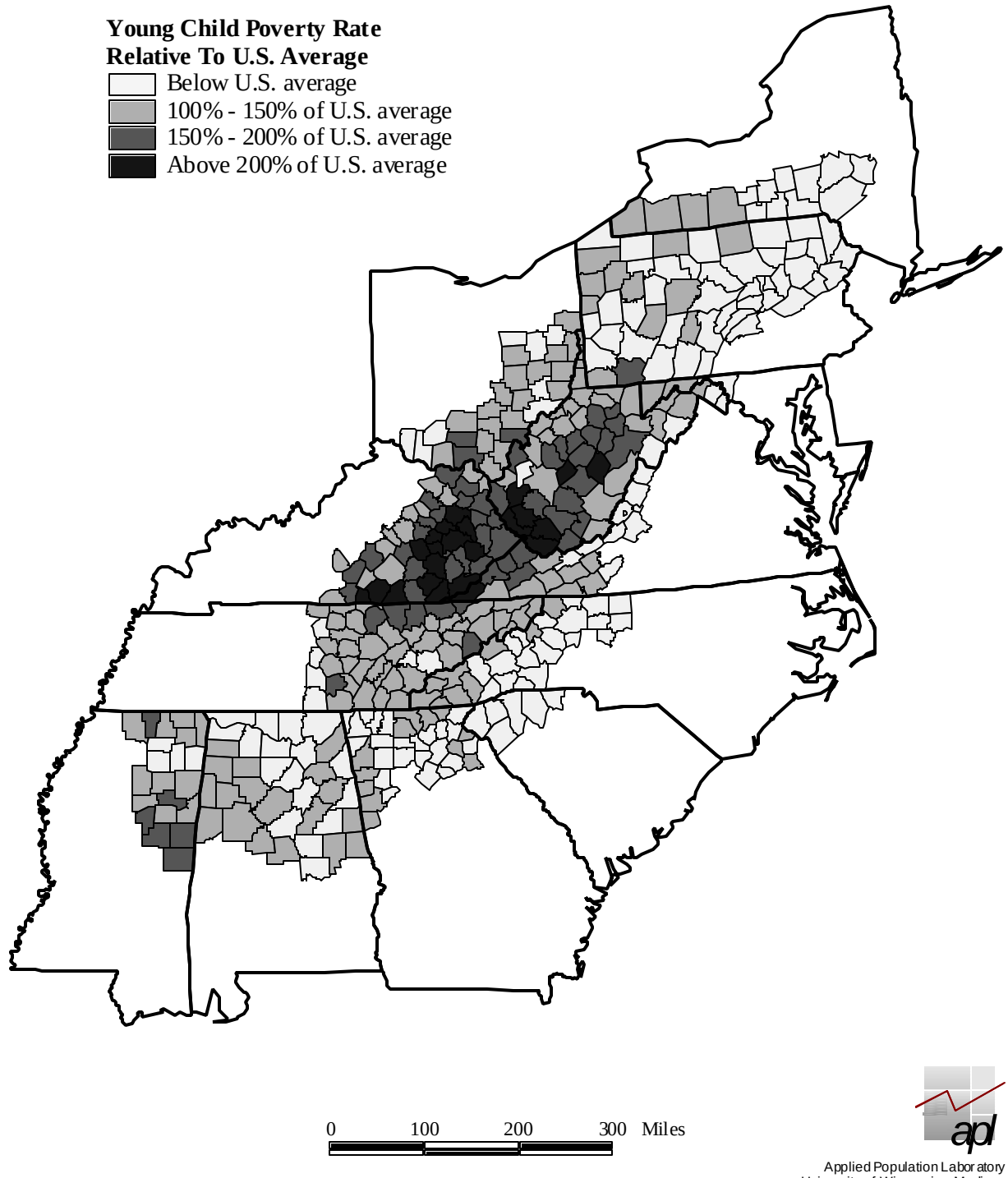

Figure 3.10:
Change in Young Child Poverty (ages 0-4), ARC Counties, 1989-1993

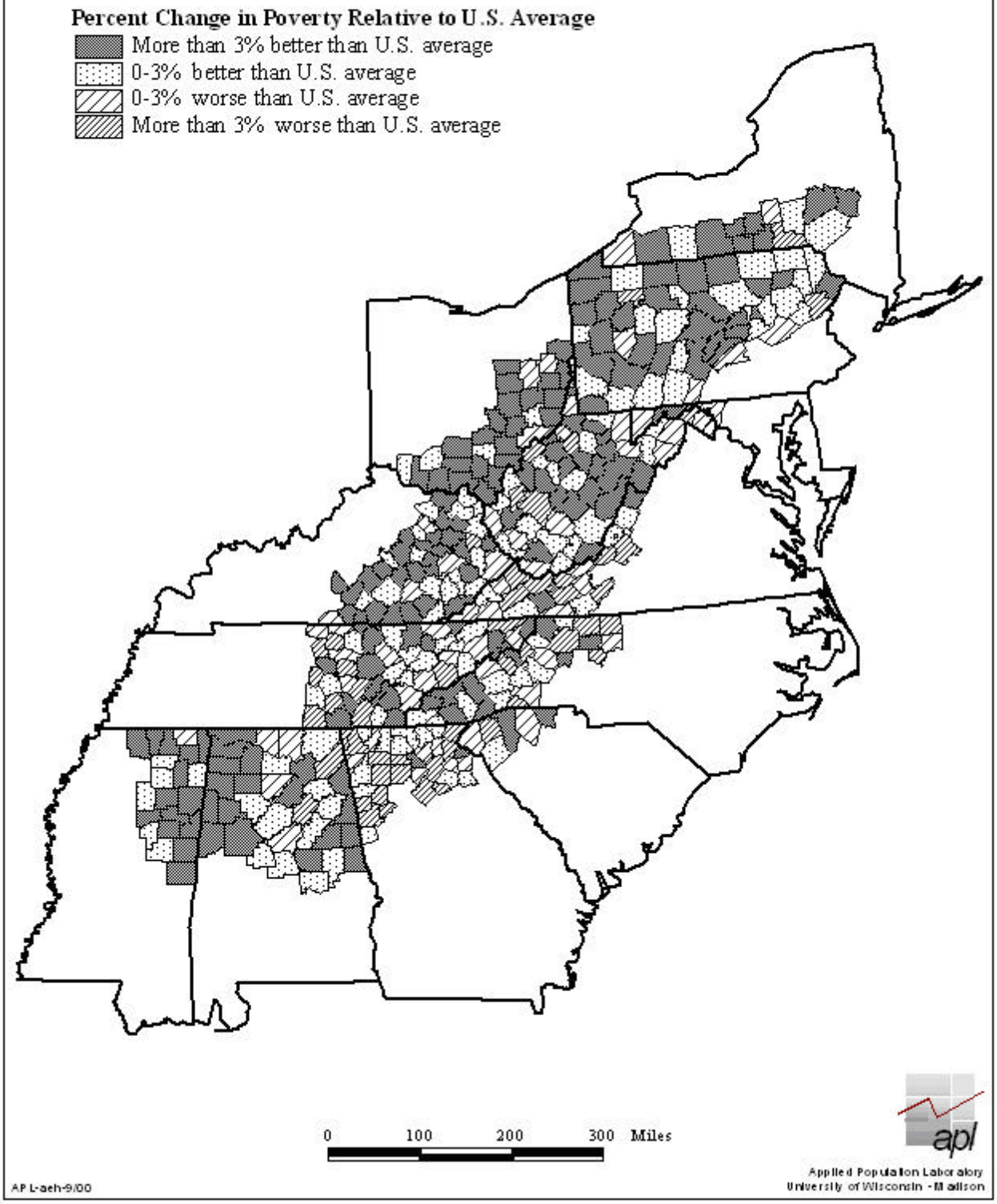

Figure 3.11:
Young Child Poverty (ages 0-4), ARC Counties, 1995 (SAIPE)

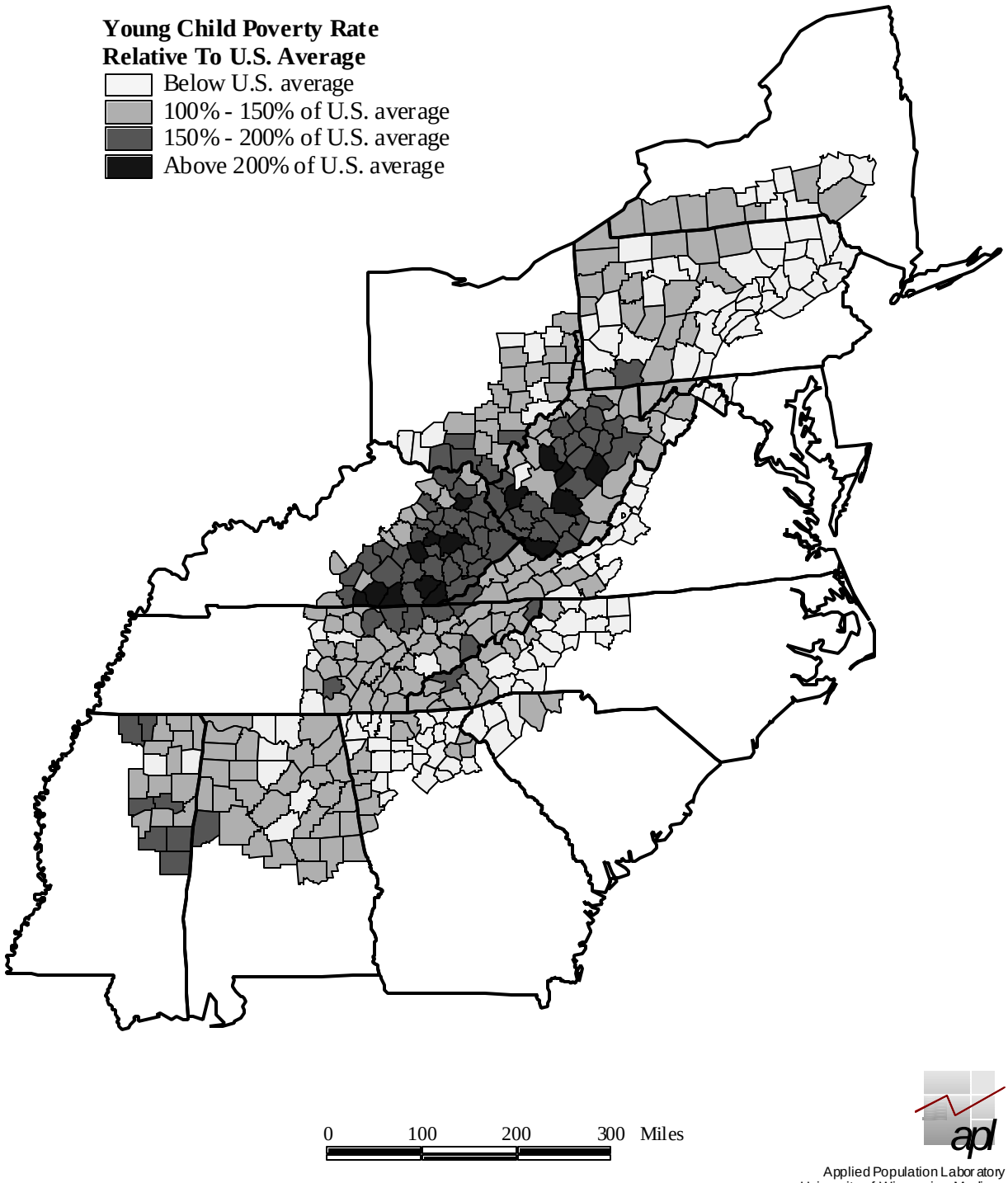

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Figure 3.12:
Change in Young Child Poverty (ages 0-4), ARC Counties, 1993-1995 (SAIPE)

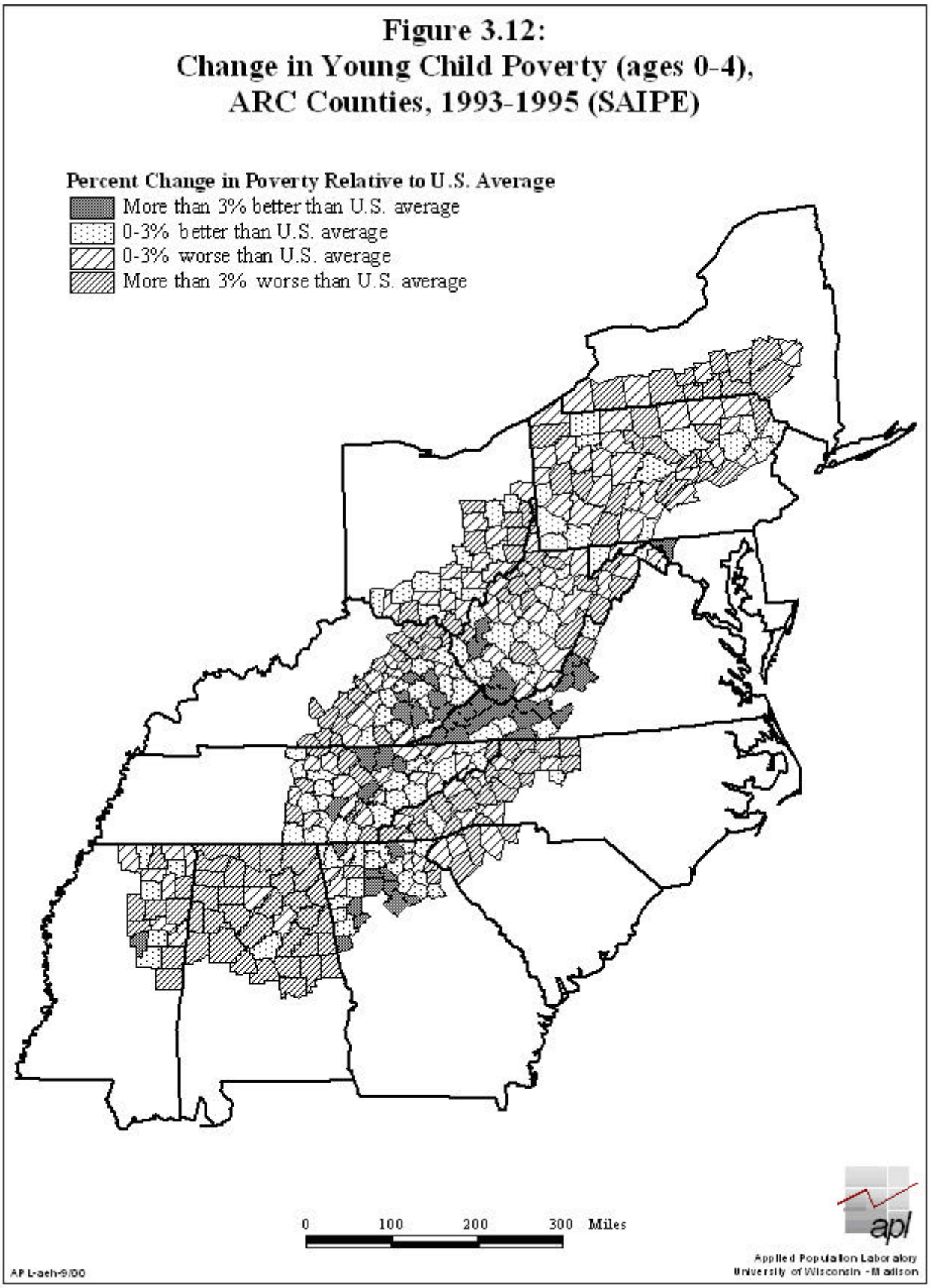
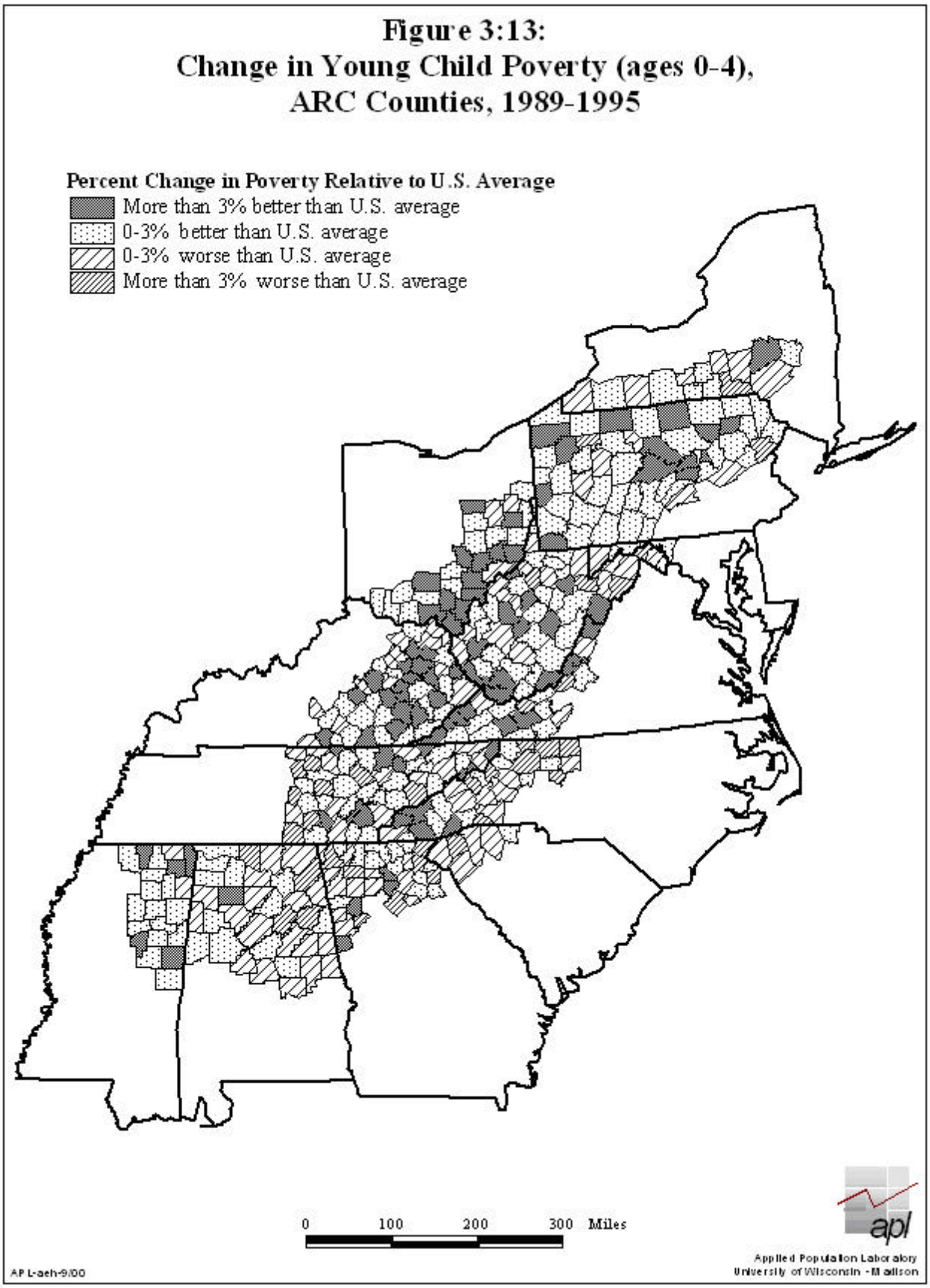


Figure 3:13:
Change in Young Child Poverty (ages 0-4), ARC Counties, 1989-1995



Among the Appalachian states, counties within Kentucky had, by far, the highest child poverty rates in 1989 (see Table 3.7). Child poverty in these Kentucky counties increased through 1993, as it did in the majority of Appalachian counties. Georgia had the lowest child poverty rates among its Appalachian counties in 1989, and maintained this relative position, although they did experience overall increases over the next several years.

Table 3.7:
Poverty rates for children ages 0-17 years, by state within Appalachia

	Number of counties	1989 SAIPE	1989 Census	1993 SAIPE	1995 SAIPE
Alabama	37	20.6%	20.6%	23.3%	23.0%
Georgia	37	12.7%	12.1%	16.4%	15.1%
Kentucky	49	41.4%	36.1%	39.8%	37.8%
Maryland	3	18.4%	17.2%	19.3%	18.7%
Mississippi	22	28.0%	28.6%	28.6%	27.1%
New York	14	14.2%	16.4%	21.0%	20.7%
North Carolina	29	16.2%	15.5%	18.2%	18.5%
Ohio	29	24.5%	23.6%	24.8%	21.8%
Pennsylvania	52	16.8%	17.4%	19.8%	18.0%
South Carolina	6	14.1%	14.9%	17.9%	18.0%
Tennessee	50	21.9%	21.0%	25.8%	22.5%
Virginia	23	26.4%	21.5%	25.5%	22.5%
West Virginia	55	26.1%	26.2%	32.6%	30.0%
Appalachia	**406**	**20.5%**	**20.1%**	**23.3%**	**21.6%**

Metropolitan status is another county-level characteristic that may influence child poverty rates. Table 3.8 indicates that non-metropolitan counties in Appalachia have had, and continue to have, significantly higher rates of child poverty than metropolitan counties. While both county types follow the same general trend between 1989, 1993 and 1995, the particular economic conditions that exist in non-metropolitan Appalachia, including high unemployment, industry and job loss, and lack of adequate infrastructure may contribute to the sustained nature of their higher child poverty rates.

Table 3.9 provides more specific information regarding county types and child poverty rates. While in general non-metropolitan counties in Appalachia have higher child poverty rates than do metropolitan counties, the Urban Continuum code (used earlier in Section II) provides an even closer correlation with poverty rates. For example, in the 1989 Census, *metro-core*

Table 3.8:
Poverty rates for children age 0-17 years, by 1993 metropolitan status within Appalachia.

	Number of counties	1989 SAIPE	1989 Census	1993 SAIPE	1995 SAIPE
Metropolitan	109	16.9%	17.2%	20.5%	18.9%
Nonmetropolitan	297	25.0%	24.0%	27.0%	25.3%
Appalachia	**406**	**20.5%**	**20.1%**	**23.3%**	**21.6%**

counties in Appalachia had a 14.4 percent child poverty rate. The child poverty rate increased along the Urban Continuum scale to 26.5 percent for *nonmetro, 20,000 urban population, non-adjacent to metro* Appalachian counties. The child poverty rate was somewhat lower (23.9 percent) for the next category of counties, but increased again to 30.6 percent, fell to 27.6 percent, and then rose to a 35.5 percent child poverty rate for *Non-metro, rural adjacent to metro* Appalachian counties. The 1993 and 1995 SAIP estimates followed this exact pattern of relative child poverty rates along the Urban Continuum.

Table 3.9:
Poverty rates for children age 0-17 years, by 1993 Urban Continuum (Beale Code) within Appalachia.

1993 Beale Category	Number of counties	1989 SAIPE	1989 Census	1993 SAIPE	1995 SAIPE
Metro-core	7	14.2%	14.4%	17.2%	15.0%
Metro-fringe	12	16.6%	15.6%	18.7%	16.4%
Metro-medium	59	17.8%	17.8%	21.7%	20.0%
Metro-small	31	17.8%	18.9%	21.9%	21.1%
Non-metro, 20,000 urban population, adjacent to metro	20	19.8%	20.3%	23.2%	21.6%
Non-metro, 20,000 urban population, non-adjacent to metro	11	20.7%	22.6%	26.5%	24.4%
Non-metro, 2,500-19,999 urban population, adjacent to metro	83	21.3%	21.1%	23.9%	22.6%
Non-metro, 2,500-19,999 urban population, non-adjacent to metro	78	29.2%	27.4%	30.6%	28.6%
Non-metro, rural, adjacent to metro	40	25.8%	24.9%	27.6%	25.9%
Non-metro, rural non-adjacent to metro	65	39.8%	32.5%	35.5%	34.2%
ARC counties	**406**	**20.5%**	**20.1%**	**23.3%**	**21.6%**

Considering the Starting Level *of Young Child Poverty and Subsequent* Change

We examine the *Young Child Relative Poverty Position* of ARC counties for the most recent period, 1993-1995 in order to provide a more meaningful analysis of change when considering the starting levels of young child poverty. Table 3.10 shows a cross-tabulation of the 1993 young child poverty rates in Appalachian counties and the change in poverty rates between 1993 and the 1995 SAIP estimates. The national benchmark for level of young child poverty was 27.9 percent and the national change in the young child poverty rate over the two years was a decrease of 3.7 percent. The percent of counties with higher than average young child poverty

rates was almost 63 percent. A similar percentage of counties (63.4 percent) had young child poverty rates that were either increasing, or decreasing less than the national young child poverty level. The largest proportion of counties (38.6 percent) fit into the Worst category with a higher than average starting level of young child poverty in 1993, *and* a worse than average change in young child poverty between 1993 and 1995. Only 12.3 percent of Appalachian counties were considered to be in the *Best Position* (low starting rates and greater than average declines). Compared to the U.S. as a whole (Table 3.11), Appalachia had a similar proportion of its counties in the *Worst* position, but significantly fewer in the *Best* position.

Table 3.10:
Young Child Poverty Relative Position of Appalachian Counties, 1993-1995

Level	Change in Young Child Poverty Rate Less Than U.S. (< -3.7%)	Change in Young Child Poverty Rate Greater Than U.S. (> -3.7%)	Total
Counties Below U.S. Young Child Poverty Rate in 1993 (< 27.9%)	***Best*** 49 12.3%	***Worrisome*** 99 24.8%	*148* ***37.1%***
Counties Above U.S. Young Child Poverty Rate in 1993 (> 27.9%)	***Hopeful*** 97 24.3%	***Worst*** 154 38.6%	*251* ***62.9%***
Total	*146* ***36.6%***	*253* ***63.4%***	*399* ***100%***

Table 3.11:
Relative Young Child Poverty Position of U.S. Counties, 1993-1995

Level	Change in Child Poverty Rate Less Than U.S. (< -3.7%)	Change in Child Poverty Rate Greater Than U.S. (> -3.7%)	Total
Counties Below U.S. Child Poverty Rate in 1993 (< 27.9%)	***Best*** 721 23.0%	***Worrisome*** 1020 32.6%	*1741* ***55.6%***
Counties Above U.S. Child Poverty Rate in 1993 (> 27.9%)	***Hopeful*** 382 12.2%	***Worst*** 1008 32.2%	*1390* ***44.4%***
Total	*1103* ***35.2%***	*2028* ***64.8%***	*3131* ***100%***

Figure 3.14 provides the spatial distribution of the relative young child poverty position for ARC counties between 1993 and 1995. The geographic patterns are very similar to the patterns of starting position and change for overall child poverty with a few exceptions. The Appalachian counties that were categorized as "best" again were not markedly geographically clustered

except in the counties adjoining the Atlanta, Georgia, Cincinnati and Columbus, Ohio metropolitan areas. Notably the best category cluster that appeared in total child poverty among the westernmost Appalachian counties in Tennessee along Interstate 65 does not appear in young child poverty. Counties classified as "worrisome" again seemed to follow a sickle-shaped pattern from New York and Pennsylvania south, along the western Virginia border, the western Carolina borders, into northern Georgia and Alabama. Finally, those counties with high rates of child poverty in 1993 and worse than average change in the following two-year period were again clustered in eastern Kentucky, West Virginia, and in parts of Mississippi and Alabama. Like for overall child poverty, there were smaller clusters of these worst category counties in New York, Virginia, and North Carolina, but unlike overall child poverty there was not a cluster in Georgia. The pattern of worst counties in Kentucky was quite distinct with a solid line several counties wide following the entire western border of Appalachia and then extending into Tennessee. The geographic distribution of hopeful counties for young children is quite different than it was for all children. Tennessee is not as dominant in this category and there is a large and contiguous cluster of hopeful counties in eastern Kentucky, Western Virginia, and Virginia.

Figure 3.14:
Relative Young Child Poverty Position, ARC Counties, 1993-1995 (SAIPE)