



The African American Press

The Black press, with assistance from churches, cultural institutions, political organizations and schools, have been central to community development, education, literacy and economic prosperity in the Black community. The Black press developed as a means of collective expression and dialogue based on the broader channels of public media, particularly newspapers, being unavailable to African Americans.

As one African American journalist puts it, "We didn't exist in the early papers. We were never born, we didn't get married, we didn't die, we didn't fight in any wars, we never participated in anything of scientific achievement, we were truly invisible." But in the African American press, "We did get married. They showed us our babies being born. They showed us graduating from colleges and universities. They showed us achieving in all areas of life."

Historically, the majority press was often used as a vehicle to denigrate and criticize the African American community.

In 1827, *Freedom's Journal* was published and proclaimed in the first issue, "Too long have others spoken for us... We wish to plead our own case." 193 years later, the National Newspaper Publishers Association was established. This association was comprised of more than 200 newspaper publications in the United States and the Virgin Islands. They have a combined readership of some 15 million readers.

The African American Press also served a very practical purpose and chronicled life within the Black community. In the 1920s and 1930s, the African American press informed readers of jobs and other resources that were available in order to get around segregation. The African American press was a lifeline in the Black community.

Some of the older, more widely circulated publications are *The New York Amsterdam News*, *The Chicago Defender*, *The Pittsburgh Courier*, *The Wilmington Journal* (North Carolina), and *The Baltimore Times*.

The African American press, like most newspapers, have evolved from paper and ink to a digital format. We have included a link to all of the African American newspapers that are still in publication. We encourage you to click on and browse through the publication(s) of your choice. There may even be some publications from your hometown

or state.

<https://nnpa.org/current-members/>

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