



The Obsidian Collection

African American Media Today

Building the Future From the Past

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STATE OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MEDIA: TAKEAWAYS

- America's Black press is made up of 158 publications across 29 states and D.C., with 20.1 million online readers.
- The Black press was particularly hard hit by the loss of advertising revenue when tobacco companies pulled print advertising.
- Building and maintaining archives can provide not only an important record of the history of the black press but also a template for strengthening the Black press today.

Introduction

Since its creation in the early 19th century, the Black press has played a crucial role in the broader journalism industry – reporting on relevant issues within the African-American community, shining a light on both its challenges and triumphs and providing a nuanced portrait of the lives of Black Americans when mainstream media would not. Today, Black legacy press faces many of the same struggles of the news industry overall, namely adapting to major losses of advertising revenue and an increasingly digital information landscape. Some legacy outlets are reimagining how they work and connect with their communities, while several young entrepreneurs of color are building digital-first organizations that tap into today's news landscape. Both uniquely function to deliver news to Black audiences and tell the multitude of stories that exist in the Black community.

As a journalism funder, Democracy Fund is dedicated to increasing the diversity of sources, stories, and staff in newsrooms. This includes supporting mainstream newsrooms as they work to better reflect the communities they serve, but also importantly, media that are both by and for diverse communities in the United States. That's why we've commissioned this report on the state of African-American media today, which takes a look at its past, current trends and challenges, and opportunities for Black press today. This report is the second in a series of reports on ethnic media in the United States.

This report was completed by the Obsidian Collection, a nonprofit organization based in Chicago that partners with Black legacy press to help digitize their countless photos and documents chronicling African American life over time. They're working to preserve this rich history for generations to come, while also monetizing these archives in the digital age. Obsidian Collection is a current grantee of Democracy Fund, and it is just one partner in our efforts to ensure a media landscape as diverse as American communities today.

Originating in the 1800s to advocate for the abolition of slavery, African-American and Black media in the United States has throughout its history been a powerful voice for and to the African-American community. Today, even amid struggles brought about by losses in advertising revenue, the Black press continues to be a voice for the African-American community, particularly online. This report is a landscape analysis, providing a brief history of the Black press, an overview of the current state of Black newspapers and digital media, and recommendations for maintaining and strengthening Black media.

A Brief History of the African-American and Black Legacy Press

On March 16, 1827, in New York City, the African American owned and operated press was born, with the launch of *Freedom's Journal*. A weekly newspaper helmed by Samuel Cornish and John B. Russwurm, *Freedom's Journal* advocated for the abolition of slavery. The newspaper's first issue declared eloquently and succinctly the newspaper's mission: "We wish to plead our own cause. Too long have others spoken for us."¹

Freedom's Journal folded in 1829. Its successor, *The Rights of All*, was founded by Samuel Cornish and also short-lived – shuttering before the end of 1829. Regardless of the longevity of these publications, they are credited for planting the seeds for an independent Black press some 30 years before the start of the Civil War. A testament to the significance of these forbearers is that the pronouncement appearing in the inaugural issue of *Freedom's Journal* 190 years ago – "We wish to plead our own cause" – remains the mantra of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), the trade association of America's Black press.²

During this period, *The North Star* is cited as being the most influential Black newspaper. Published in Rochester, New York, and edited by famed abolitionist and Black history icon Frederick Douglass, *The North Star* was printed from late 1847 to June 1851, when it merged with another publication and was reborn as *Frederick Douglass' Paper*. While they might not have readily admitted it, presidents, congressman, and statesmen read Douglass's newspapers. At its height, *The North Star* had 4,000 readers, and it was read not only in the United States but also in Europe and the West Indies.³

By the start of the Civil War in 1861, America was home to more than 40 Black-owned and -operated newspapers. While reporting the news of the day was an important function for these publications, advocacy was their primary objective. These publications fought for liberation and rights; they sought to instill racial pride; they provided their readers perspective around the events affecting the African-American community. In short, African-American newspapers gave African Americans the news through the lens of their own eyes.⁴

Most cities already had newspapers aimed at the general public, but too often they provided a slanted and distorted view of African Americans. The value and need for a press "for us, by us" was evident in Samuel Cornish's day, when African Americans were routinely vilified by the mainstream press. In the 1820s, New York newspapers frequently ran content that encouraged slavery because the New York region's economic success as a cotton exporter and textile producer was intertwined with the fortunes of the South. In the pages of the mainstream press, Black people were mocked, portrayed as children that white society needed to parent, and stereotyped as paupers and criminals.

As stated by Columbia journalism professor Phyllis Garland, the first African American and first woman to earn tenure at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, “The Black press was never intended to be objective because it didn’t see the white press being objective. It often took a position. It had an attitude. This was a press of advocacy. There was news, but the news had an admitted and a deliberate slant.”⁵

Because reading was forbidden for most enslaved people, reading newspapers became one of the hallmarks of freedom for African Americans freed from bondage after the Civil War. Historians estimate that over 500 Black newspapers sprang up in the 35 years between 1865 and the start of the 20th century. Black communities large and small launched their own newspapers, often borrowing printing presses from churches. Several of these publications lasted only a short while, but they served their communities well – elevating morale, keeping people informed, and building a sense of racial consciousness. About this era, noted professor and African-American historian Christopher Reed says, “I would rank the 19th century African American press as one of the major forces in producing one of the major miracles of that century, pulling African Americans together after slavery into cohesive communities.”⁶

In 1876, federal protection for freed slaves was ended by President Rutherford B. Hayes, putting a damper on the optimism of the Reconstruction era and ushering in the wretchedness of Jim Crow. Nonetheless, the Black press in the South survived – operating cautiously in those communities where Jim Crow had taken a dangerously violent hold. Some members of the Black press, including Ida B. Wells of Memphis’ *The Free Speech*, traveled through the South reporting on lynchings and endured the resultant threats and hostility from white Southerners.⁷

The *Chicago Defender*, founded in 1905 by Hampton Institute (now Hampton University) graduate Robert Sengstacke Abbott, is credited with fueling the Great Migration.⁸

The newspaper, which was circulated in the rural, segregated, Jim Crow South, encouraged Black Southerners to move north, where job opportunities were expanding due to industrialization in the region and to a labor shortage driven by World War I. It is estimated that from early 1900 to 1940, 1.5 million African Americans moved to major cities in the North and Midwest. The *Chicago Defender* published schedules of trains departing the South, featured classified ads for housing, and printed success stories of Black people who had migrated north, giving disenfranchised Black Southerners hope and a blueprint for securing a better life outside of the South.⁹

The impact and exploits of the Black press are remarkable, thrilling, and heartening. For example, in 1914, *The California Eagle*, led by Charlotta Bass, took on Hollywood and its derogatory depiction of Black life and Black history by railing against the release of D. W. Griffith’s “Birth of a Nation.” In the 1930s, Robert L. Vann of the *Pittsburgh Courier* encouraged Black American’s to “turn Lincoln’s picture to the wall” and abandon the Republican Party, which was largely taking the Black vote for granted, and become Democrats, thus helping Franklin D. Roosevelt win the 1932 presidential election. The Black press was also instrumental in advancing and promoting the Harlem Renaissance.

As America entered the Second World War after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Black America was battling segregation, discrimination, racial tensions, and even race riots at home. The Double V campaign was born from the quandary of whether a Black American should risk his life for a victory overseas to live as a second-class citizen in the United States.

Double V stood for victory abroad and victory at home. Promoted by the *Pittsburgh Courier*, Black America rallied behind the Double V concept, translating the slogan into songs, emblems, and even hairstyles. The campaign, however, attracted the attention of J. Edgar Hoover's FBI, and the Black press had to fight accusations of sedition.

The Civil Rights Movement proved to be a double-edged sword for the Black press. The movement was a national story that featured the African-American community at its core and was an enormous opportunity for Black journalists. The mainstream media was suddenly interested in covering Black America, and the "white press" needed talent to cover the story. This need led to a talent drain on the "Black press," as reporters and journalists left for opportunities in the mainstream. With mainstream media now covering Black life, Black readers could find news about their communities in the local, mainstream press. This development placed a downward pressure on the circulations of Black newspapers. At the same time, big advertisers, exposed to the existence of a vibrant Black middle class through the lens of the mainstream media's coverage of the Civil Rights Movement, began to see Black newspapers as a medium to reach this consumer segment. While the influx of ad dollars buffered the financial outlook of many papers, the presence of these advertisers impacted the editorial policies of the publications. Black papers now had to curtail their harshest critiques of white America if they wanted to attract advertising from corporate America.^{10,11}

Papers like the *Atlanta Daily World*, the *Baltimore Afro-American*, the *Los Angeles Sentinel*, the *Philadelphia Tribune*, the *Cleveland Call and Post*, the *New York Amsterdam News*, the *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, the *Jackson Advocate*, to name a few, left indelible marks on Black America.^{12,13} Each of these newspapers, and scores of others, spread the news about Black politics, arts, civil rights, and gave the Black community hope, inspiration, encouragement, knowledge, and a sense of self-worth and pride along with the news of the day.

“

The strongest, most influential institution among Blacks was its crusading press. It set the stage for...school desegregation in 1954 to the voting rights bill of 1957, the marches, sit-ins and civil rights legislation of 1964.”

Larry Muhammad,
Black Press: Past and Present

The Landscape of Current African-American Newspapers

The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), formerly the National Negro Publishers Association – the more than 70-year-old trade association for America’s Black press – currently lists 158 members, representing 205 publications across 29 states and the District of Columbia.¹⁴ Collectively, these print newspapers reach more than 20.1 million readers per week, and NNPA papers online garner 35 million page views per month on social media.¹⁵

The audience for NNPA member papers is primarily between 25 and 35 and married, with a median income between \$35,000 and \$45,000. Online, the NNPA audience is predominantly female, with Twitter bringing in the largest audience, followed by Facebook and Instagram.¹⁶

Aggregate figures are only part of the story. African-American newspapers are concentrated in markets with large Black populations or higher numbers of Black households, and the vast majority of these publications are distributed weekly. However, distribution of these publications is not necessarily related to population. Los Angeles has the highest number of African-American newspapers with seven publications printed within its metro area that have a median circulation of 26,559. One of these papers, the *Los Angeles Wave*, has the highest circulation of any African-American newspaper in the United States at 92,200.

Los Angeles is an interesting case because it has a lower Black population than other cities such as Detroit, Baltimore, and Memphis. Yet Black newspapers are less prominent in these three cities. Memphis and Detroit each have one African-American newspaper. The *Michigan Chronicle* has a circulation of 26,715, while Memphis’s *Tri-State Defender* has a circulation of 5,500. Baltimore has two African-American newspapers with an average circulation of 15,019. One of these papers, the *Afro-American*, circulates in nearby Washington, D.C., as well. The Appendix details newspaper circulation in the top African-American markets in the United States and the sources of their audit data.

DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT OF NNPA READERSHIP

- Total Audience:** 20.1 million per week
- African-American:** 99%
- Median Age:** 25-35
- Married:** 40%
- Median Income:** \$35,500 to \$45,000
- Monthly Unique Website Visitors (United States only):** 2 million
- Women:** 55%
- Monthly Page Views (United States only):** 35 million
 - Twitter: 15 million
 - Facebook: 12 million
 - Instagram: 10 million

The Digital Black Press

The 21st century has been challenging for newspapers of all sorts including the Black press. Some publications have shuttered. Others have moved completely online, while others have reduced their frequency to cut costs. Embracing the internet as an opportunity rather than a threat has given other publications a chance at new life and the prospect of reaching wider audiences. Social media, in particular, has given scrappy Black press outlets a platform to disseminate information and to advocate for societal change.

Using Comscore data for the top 22 Black-focused websites, the median audience size of these websites is just under two million average monthly unique visitors. Collectively, these websites saw a median decrease in average monthly visitors of about four percent between 2015 and 2016. However, there were a few standouts that saw large growth in their audiences in 2016. The website for Black Entertainment Television, *bet.com*, the largest Black-focused website, had over 13 million average monthly unique visitors, a 136 percent increase from 2015. *Huffington Post Black Voices* also saw a 136 percent increase to just over six million average monthly unique visitors. The largest increase, however, was seen by the *Atlanta Black Star*. Average monthly unique visitors for the *Atlanta Black Star* rose to 2.75 million in 2016, a 236 percent increase from 2015.¹⁷

In terms of websites which lost monthly visitors, the largest decrease was *The YBF (Young, Black, and Fabulous)*, with a 50 percent decrease in average monthly unique visitors to 360,000. This was followed by *Madame Noire's* 45 percent decrease to just under four million average monthly unique visitors and *Black America Web's* 44 percent decrease to 927,000 average monthly unique visitors. The Appendix lists these websites.¹⁸

SNAPSHOT OF THE BLACK DIGITAL AUDIENCE: BLAVITY, THE GRIO, AND THE ROOT

To understand the Black press, we need not only to look back to the history of Black journalism but also to understand the growing digital marketplace. Three of the most popular Black digital outlets are *Blavity*, *The Grio*, and *The Root*. These selected digital outlets have some of the highest readership numbers among Millennials and Generation Z age groups. Looking at the audiences for these popular Black-focused websites can help give us a sense of the characteristics of the Black digital audience.

Like the African-American population, the audiences for *The Root* and *The Grio* skew female. In terms of age, *The Root's* audience tends to be younger than that of *The Grio*. In fact, compared to the total U.S. internet audience, *The Grio's* visitors are overrepresented in the 45+ age range. *The Root's* audience overindexes against the 25-54 age range.

Probably a function of their age, *The Root's* visitors are likely to have kids in the home, while *The Grio's* audience has a higher proportion of readers without children at home. Both sites' audiences are likely to be affluent and college educated. The table below provides a snapshot of the most common characteristics of the two sites.¹⁹

Quantcast does not measure the audience demographics of *Blavity's* visitors. Alexa, however, reports that the website's audience skews female and overindexes for being college educated relative to the general internet audience.²⁰

Each of these sites seems positioned for future growth. *Blavity* is growing by launching new platforms and acquiring other platforms. In 2017, *Blavity* acquired *Travel Noire* and debuted *21Ninety*, which is a lifestyle brand aimed at Black women. *The Grio*, now a part of Byron Allen's Entertainment Studios, is brilliantly positioned to take full advantage of the growing importance of web video in driving traffic and ad revenue. *The Root*, while enduring some raised eyebrows after its 2015 sale to Univision (Fusion Media Group), continues to draw eyeballs to its site, and it has established franchises like *The Root 100* and *Very Smart Brothas* (VSB) to build upon. In this way, *The Root* is also primed for the future.²¹

Many social trends also seem to be fueling the bright futures of African-American-oriented news and culture sites. Among them are the overall racially tense socio-political environment in the United States, increased social and political activism associated with African Americans, African American use of social and online media, the growth of the African-American population, and the expansion of connected devices with expansive data plans.²²

“We wish to
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STATED MISSION OF FREEDOM'S JOURNAL (1827)

Challenges: A View From Black Press Publishers

Conversations with members of the NNPA help provide context to data and a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by the Black press. African American legacy newspapers are committed to getting meaningful information to the African-American community. They understand their readers distrust of mainstream media and aspire to be a voice of truth and reason. Their greatest challenge is remaining afloat amidst the ever-changing landscape of print media.

LOSS OF ADVERTISING REVENUE

Before the internet and social media, the African-American community relied primarily on the Black press to disseminate relevant information about their lives in a voice that was culturally viable and therefore credible. Publishers focused their efforts on telling great news stories and providing the most relevant information. The advertising revenue was plentiful, as the buying power of the African-American community continued to rise. Black newspapers were the most viable resource to reach the Black demographic.

The rise of the internet was responsible for the continued diminishing ad revenue of the Black press. “When the car dealers and airlines stopped advertising, we lost huge amounts of revenue,” says Frances Jackson, publisher of *The Chicago Defender*. Her vantage point is unique in that prior to becoming publisher, she was the director of sales for the national sales accounts for *The Chicago Defender*. Essentially, the Black newspapers suffered with the industry itself. Between 2000 and 2015, print newspaper ad revenues across the board fell from approximately \$60 billion to \$20 billion.²³

Additionally, Black newspapers have felt the loss of advertising revenue from one particular product more than other newspapers: cigarettes. Tobacco companies advertised to African-American communities more than to white markets. “When the cigarette industry stopped advertising, it was a crushing blow to the Black press,” says Joy Bramble, publisher of *The Baltimore Times*. “The cigarette industry used to sponsor these conferences too! You never really worried about revenue. It was always there!” In 2005, Philip Morris stopped running print ads for any of its cigarette brands. In 2008, R.J. Reynolds followed suit, even though print ads accounted for less than five percent of their hundreds of millions of dollars spent annually on marketing.²⁴

“Black newspapers suffered with the industry itself. Between 2000 and 2015, print newspaper ad revenues across the board fell from approximately \$60 billion to \$20 billion.”

BUILDING A STRONGER DIGITAL PRESENCE

Today, publishers know they need to have a stronger digital presence. They are aware of the gap between their print newspapers and the online preferences of younger African-American readers. They have websites and Facebook pages, and some have Twitter accounts, but they are very aware that it is not enough. Real Times Media's Vice President of Business Development Tanisha Leonard shared the company's goals of creating a digital news presence that shares all five of its newspapers' databases. "We are watching organizations like *Huffington Post* determine what Black stories are elevated to national news stories. We plan to drive that narrative too, instead of others having the final say in what's important to us," says Leonard.

The absence of capital and the unclear pathway to success are the main deterrents for Black publishers to go digital. The visible camaraderie of a significant number of publishers at the NNPA Annual Convention was a strong indication of their willingness to collaborate on digital solutions. They have already formed a news bank, or news wire of information, available to their members for reuse called *Black Press USA*. It is a start, but it is not nearly enough to reach new generations of young African-American readers.

BUILDING AND MAINTAINING ARCHIVES

Almost all of the African American legacy newspapers have significant archives. They have guarded the Black archives like the Knights Templar. It has been a primary goal of these newspapers to guard Black history. They know the emotional value of that history. They are beginning to understand its fiscal value. Many publishers are interested in sharing the archives with the younger generations, and they seek ways to share that information effectively. When told of the possible editorial and revenue streams to be generated from their own archives, every publisher was interested.

In many African-American communities, traditional legacy newspapers are either in the process of closing or have already ceased operation. In the worst cases, this leaves some communities without an operating source of local news. Even in communities where legacy newspapers continue publication, some newspapers are either not equipped to provide adequate news coverage in the communities where they operate or have relied on operating standards that no longer reach a viable target audience. Smaller community newspapers that rely on traditional print-and-newsstand/box or delivery circulation options are struggling to survive. Some have turned to an online solution, with varying degrees of success. In most cases, newspaper archives are the only link between the history of communities and the present, and as such, they are vital to creating and maintaining a continuum of information in these communities.

The new digital environment presents an opportunity for this generation of African-American journalists to lend their unique insight and voices to issues important to their communities. Currently, the Obsidian Collection is working to build and maintain archives of the Black legacy press, including those papers that are still operating. Building and maintaining these archives within a single organization supports collaboration across publications, and in building from existing archives, new editors, especially citizen journalists, have a template that will lead to both editorial and advertising success.

Recommendations

The challenges faced by Black publishers and the increasing challenges of strengthening the presence of the Black press online lead to the following recommendations for creating meaningful and actionable content to improve the lives of African Americans.

BUILDING A THINK TANK FOCUSED ON JOURNALISM FOR AND IN AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

A think tank would serve as a “connector” for the “new” African-American press, commissioning projects that identify interesting reporting techniques, technologies, and business models, as well as editorial innovations. These projects would connect with the people who can help make them part of tomorrow’s journalistic ecosystem.

Such an organization would also be focused on the African-American experience, with recommendations and blueprints for calls to action. The information from this think tank should be topical to the social and political issues impacting the African-American community and suitable for journalists to communicate relevant and actionable information to readers and legislators.

SYNDICATING NATIONAL NEWS OF INTEREST TO AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

One way to help support journalism in African-American communities is helping news organizations focus their efforts on reporting local news and events by syndicating content that is of interest to these communities nationwide. An organization with a dedicated corps of journalists and writers focused on coverage of national current events and on opinion content for African-American communities is vital for the advancement of the Black press.

PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR TRAINING AND LEARNING

As the Black press continues to move online, there should be more support for tools and training to maintain the digital presence of African-American media. This includes the development and training for use of apps by journalists; conventions bringing together editors of the Black press to discuss and learn about new techniques for business growth and reporting; and a clearinghouse for information about and access to programs that focus on audience development, revenue generation, business and leadership acumen, and tech and reporting issues. Collaborations with nonprofit newsrooms and suppliers have resulted in the production of many examples of outstanding journalism. Examples of successful collaborations include the work of *The Marshall Project* with *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Slate*, *The Atlantic*, *Time*, *Houston Chronicle*, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, *The Virginian-Pilot*, *Ebony*, *Vice*, the *Investigative Post*, and WGRZ in Buffalo.

Appendix A:

BLACK PRESS CIRCULATION IN TOP AFRICAN-AMERICAN MARKETS

NEWSPAPER	LOCATION	CIRCULATION	SOURCE
Atlanta Daily World	Atlanta, GA	4,100	Verified Audit Circulation (VAC)
Atlanta Inquirer	Atlanta, GA	56,000	gaebler.com
Crossroads News	Decatur, GA	28,000	Media Kit
The Atlanta Voice	Atlanta, GA	22,478	Alliance for Audited Media (AAM)
The Champion Newspaper	Decatur, GA	30,000	Media Kit
Afro-American*	Baltimore, MD	10,038	AAM
The Baltimore Times	Baltimore, MD	20,000	Media Kit
Chicago Crusader	Chicago, IL	88,000	Chicagoistheworld.com
Chicago Defender	Chicago, IL	11,129	VAC
Muslim Journal	Chicago, IL	35,000	Mondotimes.com
The Gary Crusader	Chicago, IL	56,000	Chicagoistheworld.com
Dallas Examiner	Dallas, TX	9,340	Circulation Verification Council (CVC)
Dallas Post Tribune	Dallas, TX	3,938	CVC
Dallas Weekly	Dallas, TX	4,910	AAM
East Texas Review	Longview, TX	3,928	CVC
North Dallas Gazette	Dallas, TX	8,897	CVC
Michigan Chronicle	Detroit, MI	26,715	VAC
African-American News and Issues	Houston, TX	175,000	Media Kit
Houston Defender	Houston, TX	30,250	AAM
Houston Forward Times	Houston, TX	64,580	Media Kit
Jacksonville Free Press	Jacksonville, FL	43,500	mondotimes.com

NEWSPAPER	LOCATION	CIRCULATION	SOURCE
The Florida Star	Jacksonville, FL	21,000	Florida State Press Association
L.A. Watts Times, Inc.	Los Angeles, CA	26,327	CVC
Los Angeles Sentinel	Los Angeles, CA	26,791	CVC
Los Angeles Wave	Los Angeles, CA	92,200	AAM
Our Weekly	Los Angeles, CA	45,000	echo-media.com
Pasadena/San Gabriel Valley Journal	Pasadena, CA	10,000	echo-media.com
Precinct Reporter	San Bernardino, CA	55,000	echo-media.com
San Bernardino American News	San Bernardino, CA	6,000	mondotimes.com
Tri-County Sentry	Oxnard, CA	8,000	echo-media.com
Tri-State Defender	Memphis, TN	5,500	echo-media.com
South Florida Times	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	20,000	echo-media.com
The Miami Times	Miami, FL	11,807	VAC
Westside Gazette	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	30,000	echo-media.com
Nashville Pride	Nashville, TN	36,000	mondotimes.com
The Tennessee Tribune	Nashville, TN	45,000	echo-media.com
New York Amsterdam News	New York, NY	6,777	AAM
New York Beacon	New York, NY	24,000	echo-media.com
New York Carib News	New York, NY	15,000	Media Kit
Westchester County Press	Westchester, NY	12,000	gaebler.com
The Philadelphia Tribune**	Philadelphia, PA	91,200	Media Kit
Afro-American*	Washington, DC	10,038	AAM
District Chronicles	Washington, DC	10,000	echo-media.com
Washington Informer	Washington, DC	16,930	echo-media.com

* Circulation figures for the *Afro-American* include both the Baltimore and Washington, D.C., editions.

** Daily circulation. All other papers circulate weekly.

Endnotes

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ABOUT DEMOCRACY FUND

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ABOUT THE OBSIDIAN COLLECTION

The Obsidian Collection is a Chicago-based nonprofit organization that is dedicated to preserving the rich history of black legacy press to help build its future. Through digital archiving of millions of print documents and photographs, the Obsidian Collection aims to create new revenue streams for historic black media in the digital age, while providing the public with the historic and factual accounts of African-American life in the United States. To learn more, visit www.theobsidiancollection.org.



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