

BUILDING THE BLACK PRESS

Explore Black press history through the built environment

buildingtheblackpress.com



CHICAGO

South Parkway, 1941
Russell Lee, Library of Congress



1 Afro-American News Office

3104 South State Street

This news office was an important early space for the dissemination of Black periodicals in Chicago. Listed in the *Colored People's Blue-book and Business Directory* (1905)

2 Chicago Searchlight

3153 South State Street

Edited by local educator Willis Huggins, the *Searchlight* was briefly one of Chicago's most popular Black papers during the late 1910s and early 1920s.

3 Chicago Defender

3159 South State Street

The official offices of the *Defender* from 1905 into the early 1920s. Publisher Robert Abbott rented a bedroom here from landlady Henrietta Lee. Over time, the paper would expand throughout much of the property, eventually displacing Lee herself.

In its later years, the *Defender's* content romanticized this make-shift and unsuitable office as the paper's true "home."



4 Chicago Whip

3420 South State Street

One of numerous offices used by the *Whip*, an upstart competitor to the *Defender* that garnered a reputation as Black Chicago's most radical paper. Founded in 1919, the paper remained in print for around two decades.

5 Overton Hygienic Building

3619 South State Street

The centerpiece of Anthony Overton's business empire, which included cosmetics, an insurance company, a bank, and the *Half-Digest*, a monthly magazine designed for discerning, middle-class Black readers

6 Chicago Bee Building

3647 South State Street

Described by the *Chicago Tribune* as a "modernist bit for South State," the Bee building was built to house the *Chicago Bee*, an upmarket rival to the *Defender* which was published between the mid-1920s and mid-1940s. Its elegant art deco exteriors were intended to reflect the cosmopolitan, well-heeled editorial content of its occupant.

7 Associated Negro Press

3423 South Indiana Avenue

The headquarters of Claude Barnett's ANP during the 1920s and early 1930s. Described by historian Gerald Horne as "the most ambitious black press institution in the country."



8 Chicago Defender

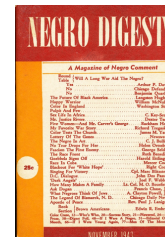
3435 South Indiana Avenue

The *Defender* relocated to this former synagogue during the early 1920s. The site quickly became a popular tourist destination and a landmark Black press headquarters, providing the *Defender* with the platform to emerge as the nation's most powerful Black newspaper.

9 Supreme Life Building

3501 South Parkway (King Drive)

Longtime HQ of Supreme Life, one of the largest Black insurance companies in the nation. In 1942 company employee John H. Johnson started a new magazine called *Negro Digest* in a office on the second floor. Less than a decade later, Johnson controlled a publishing empire headed by *Ebony* and *Jet*.



10 Ida B. Wells Home

3624 South Parkway (King Drive)

Pioneering Black journalist Ida B. Wells lived at this address during the 1920s with her husband and fellow journalist Ferdinand Lee Barnett, the editor of the *Chicago Conservator*. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974 and designated a Chicago Landmark in 1995.

Other Local Landmarks

Wabash Avenue YMCA
3763 South Wabash Avenue

Unity Hall
3140 South Indiana Avenue

Eight Regiment Armory
3533 South Giles Avenue

Sunset Cafe
315 East 35th Street

Victory Monument
35th Street and King Drive

South Side Community Arts Center
3831 South Michigan Avenue

1.75 miles
Allow 60-90 minutes

Nearest L Stops
Sox-35th (Red Line)
35th-Bronzeville-IIT (Green Line)
Indiana (Green Line)