The Ethnic Media in America:  
The Giant Hidden in Plain Sight

Conducted by Bendixen & Associates  
For New California Media (NCM)  
In partnership with  
Center for American Progress  
Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund

Final Report
METHODOLOGY

The findings of this report are based on a poll of 1895 African American, Hispanic, Asian American, Arab American and Native America adults in the United States. The total sample is comprised of 14 sub-samples, which break down as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample group</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab American</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American (Total)</td>
<td>601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Indian</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic (Total)</td>
<td>780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central American</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuban</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rican</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South American</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of the samples is representative of that specific ethnic population in the United States. Interviews for the study were conducted in the following languages: Arabic, Cantonese, English, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. All of the interviews were conducted between April 26th and May 26th of 2005. The margin of error varies between ±3.5 and ±9.9 percentage points at the 95 percent level of confidence depending on the size of the sample. The polling project was commissioned by New California Media in partnership with The Center for American Progress and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund and was designed and coordinated by Bendixen & Associates of Coral Gables, Florida.
Methodology

• Sample size – 1,895 telephone interviews with Hispanic, African American, Asian American, Arab American and Native American adults
• Dates of interviews – April 26 - May 26, 2005
• Margin of error – 2 percentage points
• Languages of interviews – Korean, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Cantonese, Tagalog, Hindi, Japanese, Arabic, Spanish and English

Adult Populations of the United States and Ethnic America

• United States 215.7 million
• Hispanic 27.1 million
• African American 24.9 million
• Asian American 9.3 million
• Native American 1.5 million
• Arab American 1.0 million
• Total Ethnic Population Studied 63.8 million

Source: 2000 US Census and 2003 American Community Survey
Sample
Country of Birth

Demographics of Samples
Age

- Hispanics
  - 18-39: 41%
  - 40+: 59%

- African Americans
  - 18-39: 39%
  - 40+: 61%

- Asian Americans
  - 18-39: 37%
  - 40+: 63%

- Native Americans
  - 18-39: 37%
  - 40+: 63%

- Arab Americans
  - 18-39: 42%
  - 40+: 58%
Demographics of Samples

Income

- **Hispanics**: 28% Under $30,000, 53% Over $30,000
- **African Americans**: 22% Under $30,000, 49% Over $30,000
- **Asian Americans**: 22% Under $30,000, 47% Over $30,000
- **Native Americans**: 20% Under $30,000, 49% Over $30,000
- **Arab Americans**: 20% Under $30,000, 49% Over $30,000

Region

- **Hispanics**: 19% Northeast, 19% Midwest, 19% South, 49% West
- **African Americans**: 16% Northeast, 26% Midwest, 26% South, 49% West
- **Asian Americans**: 11% Northeast, 25% Midwest, 25% South, 49% West

Hair color: Red for Under $30,000, Blue for Over $30,000.
Demographics of Samples
Country of Birth

Demographics of Samples
Education
Demographics of Samples
Registered to Vote

- African Americans: 14% Yes, 86% No
- Native Americans: 24% Yes, 76% No
- Arab Americans: 42% Yes, 58% No
- Asian Americans: 35% Yes, 65% No
- Hispanics: 58% Yes, 42% No
MAJOR FINDINGS

1. 29 MILLION ETHNIC ADULTS ARE “PRIMARY CONSUMERS” OF ETHNIC MEDIA

The study reveals the striking impact of ethnic media in the United States. Forty-five percent of all African American, Hispanic, Asian American, Native American and Arab American adults prefer ethnic television, radio or newspapers to their mainstream counterparts. These "primary consumers" also indicated that they access ethnic media frequently. This means that a staggering 29 million adults (45 percent of the 64 million ethnic adults studied), or a full 13 percent of the entire adult population of the United States, prefer ethnic media to mainstream television, radio or newspapers. More than half of all Hispanic adults are primary consumers of ethnic media. Approximately two-fifths of African Americans and Arab Americans and a fourth of Asian Americans and Native Americans prefer ethnic media to mainstream media.
Primary Consumers of Ethnic Media

- Hispanics: 55%
- African Americans: 42%
- Arab Americans: 40%
- Native Americans: 25%
- Asian Americans: 25%

Primary Consumers of Ethnic Television

- Hispanics: 38%
- Arab Americans: 32%
- African Americans: 14%
- Asian Americans: 13%
- Native Americans: 7%
Primary Consumers of Ethnic Radio

- Hispanics: 37%
- African Americans: 37%
- Asian Americans: 13%
- Native Americans: 5%
- Arab Americans: 1%

Primary Consumers of Ethnic Newspapers

- Hispanics: 21%
- Native Americans: 20%
- Asian Americans: 19%
- Arab Americans: 12%
- African Americans: 3%
2. ETHNIC MEDIA REACH 51 MILLION ADULTS – ONE FOURTH – OF THE ENTIRE U.S. POPULATION

In addition to the 29 million people classified as "primary consumers," ethnic media reaches another 22 million ethnic adults on a regular basis. These adults prefer mainstream media, but they also access ethnic television, radio, newspapers or websites on a regular basis. Therefore, our study indicates that the overwhelming majority (80 percent) of the ethnic populations studied is reached by ethnic media on a regular basis. The 51 million Americans reached by ethnic media represent about a quarter of the entire U.S. adult population.
Reach of Ethnic Radio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Primary Consumers</th>
<th>Secondary Consumers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African Americans</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Americans</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Americans</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab Americans*</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Primary and secondary consumers categories are 1%.

Reach of Ethnic Newspapers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
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<th>Secondary Consumers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native Americans</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Americans</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Americans</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab Americans</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Internet Access

Reach of Ethnic Websites
3. GROUPS SURVEYED SHOW DIFFERENT CHARACTERISTICS IN ETHNIC MEDIA CONSUMPTION

A. Hispanics:
The reach of Spanish-language media is almost universal in Hispanic America. Eighty-seven percent of all Hispanic adults access Spanish-language television, radio or newspapers on a regular basis. The success of the major television networks (Univision and Telemundo) is well documented but this study also indicates that Spanish-language radio and newspapers are rapidly increasing their penetration in this market. For example, one-fifth of Hispanic adults report that they now prefer Spanish-language newspapers to their English-language counterparts. There are only small variations in the media usage of the Hispanic groups studied but the poll indicates that Cubans watch Spanish-language television and listen to Spanish-language radio more often than the other Hispanic groups studied while a higher percentage of South Americans read Spanish-language newspapers. This study also reveals that Hispanics have very low access (24 percent) to the Internet.
Primary Consumers of Ethnic Media:
Hispanics – Country of Birth

- U.S. born: 31%
- Foreign born: 70%

Primary Consumers of Ethnic Media:
Hispanic Immigrants – Residency in the United States

- Less than 10 years: 70%
- 10 years or more: 70%
Primary Consumers of Ethnic Media:
Hispanics – Age

- 18-39: 54%
- 40-59: 53%
- 60+: 62%

Primary Consumers of Ethnic Media:
Hispanics – Gender

- Male: 43%
- Female: 65%
Primary Consumers of Ethnic Television:
Hispanics – National Groups

- Cubans: 50%
- Central Americans: 43%
- Mexicans: 36%
- Puerto Ricans: 33%
- South Americans: 28%

Primary Consumers of Ethnic Television:
Hispanics – Region

- Northeast: 47%
- Midwest: 15%
- South: 41%
- West: 35%
Primary Consumers of Ethnic Radio: 
Hispanics – National Groups

- Cubans: 54%
- Mexicans: 37%
- Central Americans: 34%
- Puerto Ricans: 31%
- South Americans: 31%

Primary Consumers of Ethnic Newspapers: 
Hispanics – National Groups

- South Americans: 33%
- Central Americans: 29%
- Cubans: 26%
- Puerto Ricans: 19%
- Mexicans: 17%
Reach of Ethnic Radio:
Hispanics – National Groups

Reach of Ethnic Newspapers:
Hispanics – National Groups
Internet Access:
Hispanics – National Groups

- South Americans: 47%
- Cubans: 28%
- Central Americans: 26%
- Puerto Ricans: 21%
- Mexicans: 21%
B. **African Americans:**
African American radio - stations that focus on African American themes and content - is the most popular ethnic medium among Blacks in the United States. A substantial majority of African American adults listen to ethnic radio stations on a regular basis. African Americans that are 40 years of age or older and those with annual incomes above $40,000 listen to ethnic radio more often than those that are younger or poorer. It should also be noted that the reach of African American newspapers is impressive. Even though African Americans read mainstream daily newspapers more often, African American newspapers - mostly weeklies - reach one quarter of all African Americans. Almost half of African American adults have access to the Internet.
Primary Consumers of Ethnic Radio:
African Americans – Region

- Northeast: 25%
- Midwest: 45%
- South: 37%
- West: 37%

Primary Consumers of Ethnic Media:
African Americans – Gender

- Male: 40%
- Female: 43%
Internet Access:
African Americans – Gender

Male: 50%
Female: 49%

Internet Access:
African Americans – Age

18-39: 61%
40-59: 51%
60+: 20%
Internet Access:
African Americans – Education

- Some high school or less: 19%
- High school graduate / Some college: 45%
- College graduate or more: 76%
C. **Asian Americans:**
Asian American newspapers reach a substantial percentage of the nine million Asian American adults in the United States. More than half of all Chinese and Vietnamese adults read an ethnic newspaper on a regular basis. Nearly half of all Korean adults also read a Korean newspaper frequently. The reach of Filipino newspapers is smaller but still significant – one-fifth of the adults in this group read a Filipino newspaper a few times a month or more. The poll also indicates that Korean and Chinese television stations are rapidly increasing in popularity - a quarter of those interviewed reported watching Korean and Chinese-language television more often than English-language television. Access to the Internet is very high (67 percent) among all Asian Americans and half of them prefer ethnic websites to mainstream websites. Asian Indian adults access the Internet more often than other Asians.

![Primary Consumers of Ethnic Media: Asian Americans – National Groups](image)
Primary Consumers of Ethnic Media:
Asian Americans – Country of Birth

- U.S. born: 4%
- Foreign born: 32%

Primary Consumers of Ethnic Media:
Asian American Immigrants – Residency in the United States

- Less than 10 years: 33%
- 10 years or more: 31%
Primary Consumers of Ethnic Media:
Asian Americans – Age

Primary Consumers of Ethnic Media:
Asian Americans – Gender
Primary Consumers of Ethnic Television:
Asian Americans – National Groups

Primary Consumers of Ethnic Radio:
Asian Americans – National Groups
Primary Consumers of Ethnic Newspapers:
Asian Americans – National Groups

- Vietnamese: 39%
- Chinese: 34%
- Korean: 32%
- Japanese: 6%
- Asian Indian: 1%
- Filipino: 1%

Primary Consumers of Ethnic Newspapers
Asian Americans – Region

- Northeast: 23%
- Midwest: 12%
- South: 16%
- West: 16%
Reach of Ethnic Media:
Asian Americans – National Groups

Reach of Ethnic Television:
Asian Americans – National Groups
Reach of Ethnic Radio:
Asian Americans – National Groups

Reach of Ethnic Newspapers:
Asian Americans – National Groups

*Primary consumer category for Filipino and Asian Indian is 1%
Internet Access:
Asian Americans – National Groups

- Asian Indian: 81%
- Japanese: 72%
- Chinese: 69%
- Korean: 67%
- Filipino: 64%
- Vietnamese: 42%

Internet Access:
Asian Americans – Gender

- Male: 72%
- Female: 62%
Internet Access:
Asian Americans – Age

- 18-39: 87%
- 40-59: 64%
- 60+: 37%

Internet Access:
Asian Americans – Education

- Some high school or less: 8%
- High school graduate / Some college: 53%
- College graduate or more: 84%
D. Arab Americans:
The Arabic media reaches three-quarters of all Arab Americans. Television is the preferred medium. Internet access among Arab Americans is higher than it is for any other ethnic group studied. Three-quarters of all Arab American adults have access to the Internet and a majority of them visit Arabic websites.

Primary Consumers of Ethnic Media: Arab Americans

Reach of Ethnic Media: Arab Americans

*Primary and secondary consumer categories are 1%.
E. Native Americans:
One-fifth of all Native Americans are primary consumers of ethnic newspapers. They read tribal newspapers more often than their mainstream counterparts. Native American television and radio stations have much smaller audiences. Nearly half of the Native American adult population has access to the Internet and 16 percent access websites with a focus on Native American issues.

Primary Consumers of Ethnic Media:
Native Americans

Reach of Ethnic Media:
Native Americans
4. OTHER FINDINGS

A. Even though the ethnic populations studied tend to rely on the ethnic media for information about their communities and countries of origin; African Americans, Asian Americans, Arab Americans and Native Americans prefer the mainstream media when it comes to information about politics and the U. S. government. Hispanics are the only group studied that prefer ethnic media to mainstream media for their information about political affairs. The two major Spanish-language television networks offer comprehensive coverage of the U. S. presidential campaigns and current events in Washington, D. C.

Do you rely more on ethnic media or general market media for information about your native country or about issues that are important to your ethnic community?

![Bar chart showing the percentage of each ethnic group preferring ethnic or mainstream media for information about their native country or about issues important to their ethnic community.](chart_image)
Do you rely more on ethnic media or general market media for information about *politics and government*?

![Bar chart showing the percentage of each group relying on mainstream or ethnic media for political information.](chart1)

Do you rely more on the English-language media or the Spanish-language media for information about *politics and government*?

**Hispanics – National Groups**

![Bar chart showing the percentage of each Hispanic subgroup relying on English or Spanish media for political information.](chart2)
Do you rely more on the English-language media or the Asian-language media for information about politics and government?

**Asian Americans – National Groups**

![Bar chart showing the percentage of Asian Americans who rely more on English-language media or Asian-language media for information about politics and government for different national groups: Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Japanese, Asian Indian, and Filipino. The chart indicates that Filipinos rely more on the Asian-language media (83%), followed by Koreans (53%), and then Chinese (48%). The English-language media is more popular among Vietnamese (49%) and Japanese (73%).](chart.png)
B. Primary consumers of ethnic media differed from consumers of mainstream media in their voting patterns in the 2004 presidential election. Support for President George W. Bush was stronger among primary consumers of Spanish-language television and Asian newspapers than among primary consumers of mainstream media. Senator John Kerry received greater support among primary consumers of African American radio than among primary consumers of mainstream radio.

Hispanic Voters

![Bar chart showing voting patterns of Hispanic voters between Spanish-language TV consumers and English-language TV consumers. John Kerry received 54% support among Spanish-language TV consumers and 64% among English-language TV consumers. George W. Bush received 45% support among Spanish-language TV consumers and 35% among English-language TV consumers.]

- Spanish-language TV consumers
  - John Kerry: 54%
  - George W. Bush: 45%
- English-language TV consumers
  - John Kerry: 64%
  - George W. Bush: 35%
C. Four of the five ethnic groups studied trust CNN more than Fox News to deliver accurate news and information. Arab Americans and Asian Americans prefer CNN to Fox News by more than a 4 to 1 ratio. Hispanics and African Americans also trust CNN more but by smaller ratios. Native Americans are evenly divided in their opinion about the objectivity of the two major cable news networks.

In general, which cable station- CNN or Fox News - do you trust most to deliver accurate news and objective information?
In general, which cable station—CNN or Fox News—do you trust most to deliver accurate news and objective information?

Hispanics – National Groups

Asian Americans – National Groups
D. The quality of education is the most important concern of Hispanics, African Americans, Arab Americans and Native Americans. The economy is the most important issue among Asian Americans. Only one-tenth of ethnic adults consider that the war in Iraq or terrorism is their “issue of greatest concern.”
Most Important Issue
African Americans

- Education: 28%
- Healthcare: 22%
- Economy: 22%
- Moral Values: 14%
- War in Iraq: 7%
- Terrorism: 3%

Most Important Issue
Asian Americans

- Economy: 37%
- Healthcare: 21%
- Education: 18%
- Moral Values: 9%
- Terrorism: 6%
- War in Iraq: 4%
Most Important Issue

Arab Americans

- Education: 26%
- Economy: 22%
- Moral Values: 19%
- War in Iraq: 19%
- Healthcare: 6%
- Terrorism: 3%

Most Important Issue

Native Americans

- Education: 27%
- Moral Values: 25%
- Healthcare: 18%
- Economy: 17%
- Terrorism: 7%
- War in Iraq: 4%
E. The reach of the “national” newspapers among ethnic adults is limited. Only about 5 percent of Hispanics read USA Today, the New York Times or the Wall Street Journal frequently. One-tenth of Asian and Arab Americans and one-seventh of African Americans reported reading one of the “national” newspapers every day or a few times a week.

How often do you read the newspaper USA Today / The New York Times / The Wall Street Journal?
Every day / A few times a week answers
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