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Small town Alabama never taught me much about rights. As I have learned through journalists in the state of Tennessee, a newspaper with equal representation provides me with more clarity to the injustices of our surrounding community than what higher government officials ever witness in life, themselves. I moved to Nashville two years ago and even though I absolutely adore this, I have encountered issues that can happen in any city. I am a college student that hates the smell of the Bic gel on this paper but is mainly just frustrated with a list of anxieties going through my mind right now. This is the headspace that the rest of America's population are facing, too. But, writing has helped me clear my mind to this point, as a journalist, and so I'll just withstand this ink a little longer so I can talk about why a free press is so important to our city.

Our world has turned into a real version of some dystopian novel mixed with an accurate portrayal of an economic downfall. Take a walk down the street and look at each person; walking their dogs in the Belmont Historic District; couples sitting on lawn chairs on porches- never used much until now; or your strictly Spanish-speaking neighbors playing in the grass outside with their isolated family. That all looks beautiful as we're coping. But do not forget about the wide-eyed elderly man geared up in mask and gloves as you buy dog food at a safe, six-foot distance in Kroger; the intoxicated woman buying four forty ounce cans of beer in the gas station next to you, screaming at each kid that walks past not wearing a face mask; scared, doped up men in stained T-shirts running into displays at Walmart; daughters working at Petco that are not necessarily fighting the virus on the front lines, but have to bring money home to their family, and are scared of infecting their elderly father, grandfather. This is not even to mention the nurses on the front lines. I cannot accurately convey on paper what they are experiencing, and I do not think anybody can. Free press has the job of showing society these perspectives. We all need help right now. Thorough, real free press can help us know to help one another.

These are current examples of the need for free press in our country. It is most important that a free press clearly represents differing perspectives of the community. It is our responsibility, as journalists, to seek out the different conditions of our society and clearly convey that for our readers. Nashville's free press currently has the opportunity to show our city perspectives it has never seen. A controlled press gives America's democracy what it wants to see. A free press gives America's society what it needs to see. Now it is our responsibility to ask ourselves, are we using our available free press to the extent we must while we have it?