

Frank Runyon
Richview Middle School, 7th Grade
Clarksville, TN

WHY A FREE PRESS MATTERS IN DEMOCRACY.

Since the inception of the United States of America in 1776, the media has played the role of informing citizens about ongoing political matters in the U.S.A. Our founding fathers believed in freedom of the press so highly to the extent that they made it the first amendment in the Constitution. This amendment protects Journalists from any harm or criticism they might receive from expressing their beliefs and speaking the truth.

Without the free press, we would be completely ignorant to ongoing political matters and crisis in our country. We would be fed the information that the government chooses for us to see, instead of the truth. Democracy is a system of government in which the whole population governs that country, and if the United States is truly a democracy, then shouldn't all of its members have the right to accurate information?

However, there are some cons to freedom of the press. Freedom of the press does not mean we have access to all speech. The concept of freedom of the press nearly means that we can express our beliefs in ways that do not cause legal consequences. Freedom of the press will eventually polarize society. When people express their opinions people tend to pick one side or the other, or they just don't care. But do the cons really outweigh the pros? Would you rather live in ignorance, or would you rather know what is going on in the world?

Our founding fathers valued a free press. Thomas Jefferson once said that "Freedom will be a short-lived possession unless the people are informed." Our founding fathers who believed in democracy thought that freedom of the press was an essential key to our freedom.

The press is often thought of as a fourth branch of the government because it helps balance power in the government. Without that fourth branch, the foundations of democracy starts to crumble, and eventually fall. For example, this year is the election. The press explains to us the

beliefs and arguments of each presidential candidate. If we did not have freedom of the press how would we know who to vote for? If the people do not know who to vote for then we are not voting for a president we want to be in office, just the person that the government wants to be in office.

A lawyer named Trevor Timm once said, "an independent press is one of the essential pillars of democracy." Without a pillar, a house would become weak, and eventually collapse. If you take out one of the pillars of democracy then the whole system would begin to get weaker and eventually the whole system would become corrupt.

"Freedom of the press is not just important to democracy, it is democracy."-Walter Cronkite.