

NEW HAVEN REGISTER

Wintrich now has a credible claim to being what he always imagined being: a victim

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November 29, 2017

“Legal justice” is exactly the inept phrasing I’d expect from a fake intellectual like Lucian Wintrich. He gave a talk Tuesday at the University of Connecticut called “It’s OK to Be White.” He was arrested after grabbing a woman who had grabbed his speech. The right-wing propagandist says now he will “peruse legal justice.”

That’s what I’d expect from a huckster who wants you to think he’s smart. I think he meant to say “pursue,” not “peruse,” as in “to read through.” And I think he meant to say “legal action,” because “justice” would suffice for anyone billing himself as a deep-thinking smarty.

That said, Wintrich does have a point. I have watched the videos online and it’s clear his talk was not a talk but barely contained bedlam. Security officers do not intervene when two audience members come within feet of Wintrich while he is trying to speak. One uses his phone to record Wintrich, violating his personal space.

Everything stops when the woman standing next to the guy recording Wintrich grabs his speech, and flees. Wintrich runs after her, into the audience, snatches the pages, and appears to rough her up. The security officers seize Wintrich, pushing him out the back. He is charged with breach of peace and is free on a \$1,000 bond.

In subsequent interviews, Wintrich portrays himself as the sole victim. He is not. He bears some blame. But he has a point about UConn’s responsibility to protect him. Students should never have gotten that close. Personally, I don’t mind the booing or chanting or calling him a Nazi. But getting that close, amid tensions that thick, an altercation was inevitable, and security should have known better.

There is something to say about free speech, but before I do, a word about college students and right-wing media. Wintrich says he’s the “White House correspondent” for the Gateway Pundit, but as its name implies, that website does not care about fact-finding standards practiced without fear or favor. Its mission is serving the Republican Party, and to annoy. It fails often at both. Seriously. It’s embarrassing.

As for college students, the UConn College Republicans invited Wintrich to discuss “identity politics, liberal victimhood, anti-conservative bias, and other hot-button issues.” The club evidently could not find a worthy conservative intellectual to speak at their forum, say from the Yankee Institute for Public Policy or the Cato Institute or American Enterprise Institute. So it

settled on Wintrich. This suggests something about UConn Republicans. They seem to care little about ideas, policies or politics. No, demagoguery's the thing.

I'm serious. Gateway Pundit is the bottom-feeder of "conservative" media. Wintrich is best known for the day he tweeted an image of Islamic terrorists flying a jetliner into the World Trade Center on Sept. 11. But instead of the Twin Towers, they were "CNN." Instead of a jetliner, it was the head of President Donald Trump.

The message? No one is sure, but it had something to do with the battle between a president and the constitutionally guaranteed freedom of the press. Do UConn's young Republicans understand what they invited? I hope they don't. For their sake, and ours.

As for freedom of speech, UConn students should have let Wintrich have his say, and offered counterarguments, or their own debate forum, because now Wintrich is exactly where he wants to be.

People like him believe they are victims. Equality doesn't mean equality. It means taking something from white people, and giving it to non-white people, and in the taking, white people are victims. This is entirely fictional, but Wintrich now has a credible claim to being what he always imagined being but never was: a real victim.

It's better to meet speech with speech.