

# Fight Nazis with peaceful condemnation, not punches

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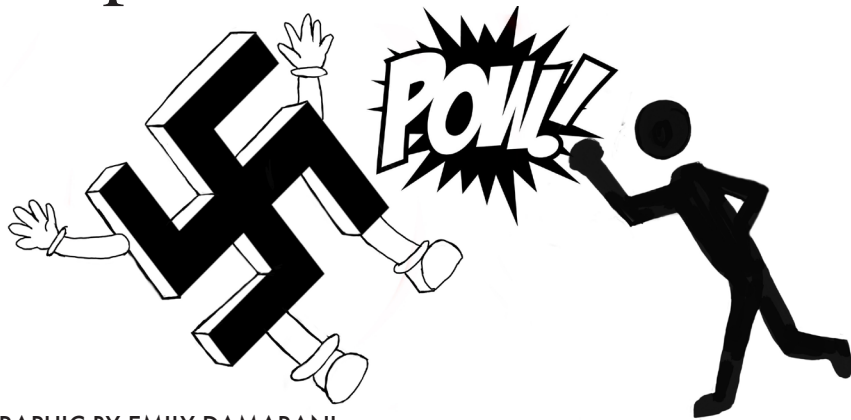
STAFF REPORTER

We've all seen the movies – Captain America and his shield bashing Nazis left and right. If one of the most iconic symbols of American Freedom does it, are we supposed to follow his example?

After the inauguration of President Trump, white supremacist and Nazi Richard Spencer was punched in the face by a protester while giving an interview. Video of the assault quickly spread around the Internet, with many celebrating the attack.

Let's be clear - the racist views Spencer promotes have no place in our society today and should disgust all of us. We should all condemn his views and followers.

But using physical violence to suppress minority views, however distasteful, sets a dangerous precedent. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), a renowned civil rights defense organization, has gone to court to defend the rights of the Klu Klux Klan and neo-Nazis in the past.



GRAPHIC BY EMILY DAMARANI

Those decisions were crucial later on in defending the rights of civil rights protesters in the South.

We need to fight Spencer and other white supremacists using legal and peaceful means. People who used violence or bypassed the law against the Westboro Baptist Church were punished with expensive lawsuits and losses all the way up to the Supreme Court.

Protesters learned their lesson and got smarter. If the WBC showed up, there

would be an even larger counter-protest to prevent them from getting their message out.

When WBC tried to visit the United Kingdom, quick lobbying had them banned from entering due to their hate speech. There's absolutely no reason we cannot do the same for Spencer and his partners.

The First Amendment protects them against the government suppressing their

speech, but as private citizens we can peacefully take away their platform.

We must never stoop to their level and resort to violence. Spencer has already told his followers to “protect themselves” - we really don't need to give them any more excuses to arm themselves.

And for the record – Captain America agrees. In issue #275, Captain breaks up a fight between neo-Nazis and counter-protesters that turned violent. He exclaims “Don't you realize that, in your attack, you've attacked your OWN freedom as well?”

He continues: “The freedom that guarantees ALL ideas – both noble and ignoble – the expression that is imperative if our society is to survive!”

The leaders of each side in the fight turn their attention to the Captain and try to attack him instead, but he quickly moves out of the way. They collide and fall over – an analogy of what will happen to our society if we resort to violence.