

Charles Murray: Violent Middlebury Protesters Should Be Suspended or Expelled

When Dr. Charles Murray went to give a speech at Middlebury College at the beginning of March, he was met by a large crowd of student protesters and angry community members, some wearing black ski masks.

Murray was unable to give his speech at the venue due to the protests and was forced to broadcast over a closed network. Middlebury professor Allison Stanger, who was escorting Murray out of the building, was attacked by protesters and hospitalized.

On June 9, in the Wall Street Journal, Middlebury College President Laurie L. Patton announced the repercussions of these actions:

“In the end, the board took disciplinary action against 74 Middlebury students. Most received probation, which means that they will face more serious penalties if they violate these policies again. A few, who took an especially prominent role in the episode, received what we call “college discipline,” which places a letter in their permanent file noting their infractions.”

[In a blog post at the American Enterprise Institute](#), Murray explained why he believes the attackers should have been more sternly punished:

“‘Probation’ at Middlebury doesn’t mean a weekly meeting with your probation officer and random drug tests. It just means a temporary mark on your record that is expunged if there is no further violation. A slap on the wrist? Not even that.”

I don't think physical assault is covered by 1st amendment either. But I'm not a constitutional scholar.
<https://t.co/EB9IYi0Jpa>

– Charles Murray (@charlesmurray) [March 3, 2017](#)

Murray offered these thoughts on what would be an appropriate response:

“I call for suspension or expulsion because we're not talking about students acting a little too boisterously or students whose worthy motives should mitigate their treatment. In my view, preventing a person from peacefully presenting a point of view on a university campus is analogous to killing a person in a community, in this limited sense: Both acts are challenges to the most elemental functions of those institutions.”

Murray waited 3 months to respond to this assault. He said he didn't want to make his ordeal a major issue by involving the press or by calling for stricter punishments for accused students. He did this out of respect for the Middlebury employees who accompanied him that night, he said, and because he wanted the investigation to run its course.

He is done being silent, however, and clearly unhappy that Middlebury officials declined to take serious action against those involved.

“Here's the reality: A guest lecturer was shouted down. A senior professor, a senior college official, and the guest

lecturer were assaulted. The professor was seriously injured. No one was punished. Not one single solitary person...

A university must be a safe place for intellectual freedom, else it has failed in its purpose. To respond to violations of that haven as the administration of Middlebury has responded is not a matter of being too soft on students. It is dereliction of duty."

I, for one, am shocked at the response from Middlebury. Students who turn a peaceful speech into a violent protest should be held accountable for their actions, especially when an innocent person is attacked.

I agree with Murray's call for the suspension of students involved. Students guilty of assault should be expelled. Putting a letter in the files will not make any difference. These students should be held accountable for their actions.