Twitter Thread by Lindsey Simmons



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When I was 25, I worked as a legislative assistant in the Missouri General Assembly.

It was a dream job, honestly.

But that dream dissipated the day the #MoLeg decided to name Rush Limbaugh as an “honorable Missourian” and place his bust in the “Hall of Famous Missourians.”

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The Hall of Famous Missourians sits in the Missouri State Capitol.

There are busts of Mark Twain, Dred Scott, Josephine Baker, Harry Truman and other legends of history.

The day I learned Rush Limbaugh would join their ranks, I thought it was a joke.

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We received phone calls from constituents appalled that Missouri would honor a man who had become infamous that year for calling a college student a “slut.”

And who just that week had continued spreading the racist birtherism lie about our then-President, Barack Obama.

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What I learned that day is that it wasn’t *despite* his racism, but because of it that he received this award.

It’s because he created a universe where it was permissible to lynch with language America’s first black President.

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Several State Representatives and their staffers intended to protest the vote and the selection.

By the time we made it to the doors of the House Floor, we weren't allowed in. It was Republicans only. The doors were locked and secured by the Highway Patrol.

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There had been contentious fights before. Debates over important issues happened frequently.

It was highly unusual.

We learned later—it was an "invitation only" event. And despite being elected officials, Democratic State Reps didn't make the cut.

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In fact, part of the reason for the mobilization by staff was that constituents couldn't be here—and that's because the entire event was kept under wraps until about an hour before it happened.

They intended to give Rush Limbaugh this great honor in darkness.

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Later—because I was not willing to fight the armed guard at the door—I learned that Limbaugh said this:

"They literally are deranged, our friends, so-called friends on the other side of the aisle, are deranged..." in response to the vehement protest against him that day.

8/

The Missouri Republicans forced him on us, against our will, without our knowledge or consent.

And they giggled while they did it. Proud of their superiority. Proud of the force they could exert.

That's what I remember about Rush Limbaugh.

He empowered + encouraged hate.

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