Courtney!!! Milan @courtneymilan · Aug 16

So there's someone going around Romancelandia right now arguing with everyone who is talking about the fact that people have been calling out a major industry player who liked tweets that fell somewhere on the range between "yikes racist" and "actual white supremacist."

10 90 273

Courtney!!! Milan @courtneymilan · Aug 16

And this is all a perfect illustration of the difference between prejudice and racism, and what systemic power looks like.

1 13 146

Courtney!!! Milan @courtneymilan · Aug 16

So let's take this particular argument that the person made, as an example. Don't go feed the stupid ass troll, but do learn from them.

Some of you remember me tweeting about an editor who, in 2011, was so shocked by my question about pubbing my AA historical romance that she went all 'deer in the headlights'.
THAT EDITOR WAS SUE EFFING GRIMSHAW.

9 13 91

3 8 107

Courtney!!! Milan @courtneymilan · Aug 16

If you don't think about the power dynamics here, this kind of sounds like a reasonable argument. Why SHOULDN'T we give people a chance to learn?

1 8 105

Courtney!!! Milan @courtneymilan · Aug 16

But Sue Grimshaw was the romance buyer for Borders, one of the biggest buyers for romance. She received the Vivian Stephens industry award for her work buying romance. She was capable of making a romance novelists' career by putting their work front and center around the country.

1 23 190

Courtney!!! Milan
@courtneymilan

Follow

She was the romance buyer for Borders while Beverly Jenkins was writing. The *idea* that African American historicals would be unfamiliar to her? Does not pass the sniff test. Not remotely.

4:45 PM - 16 Aug 2019

17 Retweets **279** Likes

3 17 279

Courtney!!! Milan @courtneymilan · Aug 16
And the corollary to being able to make someone's career with favorable placement? Is the ability to break it by not buying the book at all.

We don't know. We don't KNOW. But for decades, Black romance authors heard there was no market for their work.

1 17 226

Courtney!!! Milan @courtneymilan · Aug 16
But we heard that in a time period when one of the major bookstores was being headed by a person where we now have serious doubts as to whether they could review their work. If you were not in Borders, you would not have a career.

1 7 178

Courtney!!! Milan @courtneymilan · Aug 16
And so this anecdote actually tells you a lot about what systemic power plus prejudice can do: It can change the course of an entire industry, to the detriment of authors around us.

1 22 268

Courtney!!! Milan @courtneymilan · Aug 16
So when people are mad about this? This isn't a small thing. This isn't getting on someone's case about not being woke enough.

1 8 211

Courtney!!! Milan @courtneymilan · Aug 16
There are potential, real consequences here. And I haven't even touched on the editorial work that she has done yet.

Prejudice plus power can change an industry. And maybe it did.

2 22 245

Courtney!!! Milan @courtneymilan · Aug 16
If you really think of the power that Sue Grimshaw wielded, you'd realize that the reactions that people are having here are actually incredibly muted.

3 11 200

Courtney!!! Milan @courtneymilan · Aug 16
I've had to sort through my own reaction, which has been relatively quiet, to get

Courtney!!! Milan
@courtneymilan

Follow

I've had to sort through my own reaction, which has been relatively quiet, to get to the point where I've realized that in fact, this is a thing we should be fucking OUTRAGED by.

It's not enough to quietly delete likes.

4:53 PM - 16 Aug 2019

5 Retweets **213** Likes

6 5 213

Courtney!!! Milan @courtneymilan · Aug 16
I don't know what the answer is. I don't know what can possibly resolve this.

But I do think that this is not a thing that can go by without some kind of reckoning, and I didn't say anything for a while because I didn't know what kind of reckoning would suffice.

1 4 129

Courtney!!! Milan @courtneymilan · Aug 16
And I still don't, but I think we need to have that conversation as a community.

This isn't okay. This person has potentially done systemic harm. What now?

12 4 190

Michael Warren Lucas @mwlauthor · Aug 16
Replying to @courtneymilan
The word "guillotine" comes to mind...

1

Courtney!!! Milan @courtneymilan · Aug 16
Let's not go there, please.

6

Lisa Lin @Laforesta1 · Aug 16
Replying to @courtneymilan
Yes. that was the thing that upset me the most. How many careers has she derailed? How many authors did she discourage to the point that they gave up? We'll never know. The fact that after the tweets came to light, the floodgates opened&more stories came out spoke VOLUMES to me.

10

Chaz Stein @Charlotte_Stein · Aug 16
Replying to @courtneymilan
It's taken me a while to process too, and I think it's partly because this is such