

Subject: Harrased at Children's Pool, La Jolla
From: Courchesne <courchesne@onebox.com>
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To: harassed@san.rr.com

Today I took my first day off work in weeks and decided to take my 13 month-old daughter down to the place I learned to swim, snorkel on my father's back, and play with adult harbour seals for sometimes for up to an hour. Plus, she really like birds right now. We made our way around the wall. I remembered watching the railing get bent flat in 1984. I remembered how there would be throngs of children around the manmade cylindrical tidepools, and the summer of el Nina in 1983 when red tuna crabs infested the beach. I also wanted to check my all time favorite surf break, Casa's, on the other side of Children's Pool. I have just moved back from San Francisco, after attending the most liberal university available.

Times have really changed.

I took my daughter down to the old beach on my shoulders, and sat her down with my arms securely around her waist a few feet past the rope line, which I knew little about other than it was arbitrary. A woman next to the green shack imediately began yelling at me with a megafone. The seals then all looked up. The woman yells that there are pups. I mutely point at my daughter. I am also pupping, ok? The woman continues to yell. Another family with grade school kids takes up on our cue and carefully sets up on the rocks a the north end of the rope line. The woman continues to yell into her megaphone. I try to bare it for two more minutes and give up. I have been yelled and shouted at by a stranger for two minutes. I now feel angry. I walk up the old step, past the bathrooms which we can't use anymore, and find the lady on the cliff. My daughter is sitting on my shoulders. I ask her if she was the one yelling at me. She tells me she is on the line with a federal agent. I move to the other side of the table. Another woman pops out a camera and begins filming me. They tell me to move away because I am violent. My daughter is on my shoulders. I ask them if they own the sidewalk. I walk past the table to go into the old green shack, and then the first woman takes out a real video camera and films me doing this. I ask if its ok if I go into the shack. They continue to film me. The first woman says I am using my daughter as a shield. She yells I am violent to women and she feels sorry for my wife and child. I tell her to have a nice life and leave.

Who are these people?

Nevermind the humans, they are harassing the seals. I love the ocean and interacting with it and its creatures. I have never in my life as a dweller of La Jolla's pocket beaches, where seals come up regularly, seen any person mistreat or get too close to a seal. It is true that the seawalls of oceanfront homes have completely obliterated the beach that used to encircle all of La Jolla, so perhaps we can let the seals have this one. But the people supporting them are an embarrassment to their cause.

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