

Confronting a persistent harasser and slanderer

Letter to a Scottish lass and whale watcher

Stuart H. Hurlbert, San Diego State University, San Diego, California

June 28, 2020

Eiren Jacobson
Centre for Research into Ecological & Environmental Modelling
University of St. Andrews
St. Andrews, Scotland
eiren.jacobson@gmail.com

Hello, Eiren.

[Your June 15 attack on me](#) via twitter (see screenshot below) is exceptionally unfortunate and inappropriate and will not stand uncontested.

It demonstrates a persistent lack of knowledge, civility and integrity on your part. I first got a taste of this when you were part of a small mob of students who opposed me giving an invited talk (***Sustainability, Population, Censorship, and Unholy Left-Right Alliances***) at Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO) in February 2017. Your mob formed in response to an irresponsible email attack on me sent out to the entire SIO community, two hours before my talk was to begin, by SIO geophysicist Jennifer Haase.

Your twitter statement that, “He subsequently harassed me and other students” is a bald-faced lie. To a half-dozen students whose complaints I received directly or indirectly I responded in a very civil, friendly manner and provided additional information, including links to articles relating to each of their particular concerns. In a few cases we had an additional round of discussion. I retain all those emails. They in fact constituted one of the useful educational components of this episode. You, however, showed no interest in discussing anything with me.

Nor perhaps did you initially hear from any of my private supporters at SIO. Everyone now knows how many character assassins like you are out there waiting to help them lose their jobs. One person wrote me, “I was deeply saddened upon hearing the reaction of some of the students and even faculty, many of whom were of the opinion that you should not have been allowed to speak at our institution. And by ‘saddened’ I really mean ‘terrified.’.”

Indeed, there are many “terrified” and suppressed students and faculty members in most US academic institutions these days. The reason for the “terror” is intolerant persons like you risen to positions of power.

Your lack of integrity is also reflected in your hiding from your twitter followers the fact that my talk at SIO was very positively received by the students and faculty who attended and received 38-item literature packets as a bonus. I defended myself against all the written pre-talk criticism in a 10-page report to the entire SIO community. That generated more humorous sequelae, including \$600 in donations from SIO personnel to Californians for Population Stabilization, an organization that Jennifer Haase had attacked. The overall success of my adventure at SIO was recounted in full in a peer-reviewed bioethics journal. See:

[Attempts by scientists to suppress discussion of overpopulation: a California case that backfired nicely.](#)

Guess that article eluded your attention.

The article includes an email by my host, SIO researcher Jay Barlow, to one senior SIO faculty member who strongly opposed my presence. A portion of it characterizes very well the nature of the SIO mob:

I think that if we want our CMBC students to be comfortable leaving the ivory tower and to be successful in the policy arena, they need to be able to listen to (and debate) ideas that they fundamentally disagree with. Unfortunately, I don't think we have done a very good job in this aspect of educating our students. The response of the students to the talk by Stuart Hurlbert illustrates this. Instead of attending, listening, and disagreeing, they retreated into their like-minded twittersphere of political correctness. [Ok, they used mass emailings, but the effect is the same as twitter]. In this space, they feel comfortable with generalizations and name-calling-bordering-on-libel that would never occur in a public forum.

Now, from the safety of Scotland, you join another virtual mob in the U.S., a group of biology graduate students at San Diego State University who are gathering signatures, from anywhere in the world apparently. These are for a petition demanding that the SDSU administration revoke my emeritus professor status. This will only put more egg on your face, as it will for these SDSU students. Their petition and supporting documents contain so many patent falsehoods, I'm sure the SDSU administration is already worrying, even before they receive my lengthy rebuttal, what damage the students may be doing to SDSU's reputation. The students' claim, in brief, is that I'm a racist, belong to racist organizations and have "harassed" them by putting racist documents on bulletin boards and sending racist email messages to them.

Such violence-promoting mass hysteria is old hat to my family. My ancestors lived in the vicinity of Salem, Massachusetts in the 1690s when 19 "witches" were hunted down, found and hung. My father was in Vienna in 1933 when the Nazis there were still engaging only in small-scale terrorism but a few years later would drive his Jewish hosts at the Vienna Theater Guild to flee to England. And, of course, start killing six million more.

You have two strikes against you. Don't tempt fate or defamation lawyers. When I have rebutted the SDSU witch hunters I'll send you a copy.

Your accusatory tweets have been seen by hundreds, if not thousands of people. I have no way of reaching them to counter your errors. But I can at least add a little sunlight and transparency. So I copy this to several administrators and others at UCSD, SDSU, SIO and your current institution. They are listed below. Maybe some wiser-than-average elder will offer you good advice, e.g. apologize, add a tweet citing the article above, and withdraw your name from the SDSU petition.

Sincerely,

Stuart H. Hurlbert
Emeritus Professor of Biology
San Diego State University

CC: Pradeep Khosla (UCSD), Becky Pettit (UCSD), Daisy Scott (UCSD), Margaret Leinen (SIO), Keiara Auzenne (SIO), Stuart Sandin (SIO), Penny Dockry (SIO), Jay Barlow (SIO), Steve Welter (SDSU), Hector Salvador Hector Ochoa (SDSU), Jeff Roberts (SDSU), Julie Scalisi (SDSU), Robert Zeller (SDSU), Xiaofeng Xu (SDSU), Jamie Rhine (SDSU), David Borchers (CREEM), Catriona Harris (CREEM)



Eiren Jacobson
@eirenkate

I was a grad student at [@Scripps_Ocean](#) in 2017 when Hurlbert was invited to give a seminar, and I (and others) spoke out about the inappropriateness of the invitation and the racism of the "population stabilization" movement. He subsequently harassed me and other students.

12:05 PM · Jun 15, 2020 · [Twitter Web App](#)

26 Retweets 72 Likes



Eiren Jacobson @eirenkate · Jun 15

Replying to @eirenkate

[@SDSU](#) biology grad students are now organizing to have his emeritus status revoked:

Timeline of Harassment by Dr. Stuart Hurlbert
Timeline of Dr. Hurlbert's repeated harassments to the SDSU Biology Community This timeline is not ...
[docs.google.com](#)

1 16 51



Eiren Jacobson @eirenkate · Jun 15

Please sign, especially if you have links to the SDSU biology department!
[#sdsugrad](#) [#SIO](#) [#antiracist](#) [#ShutDownSTEM](#) [#ShutDownAcademia](#)

7 22



Sarah Smith @smith8272 · 22h

Replying to @eirenkate and @Scripps_Ocean

I remember this! He's gotta go

Interaction icons: reply, retweet, like, share