

March 24, 2022

To the Leaders of Scrabble Organizations:

As a player, director, and member of the North American Scrabble community, I write to report information about a player whom I believe to pose a threat to the public safety of our community. Specifically, I write to report that David Koenig (Dave) has engaged in the following behavior:

1. Coerced me to have sex with him after I repeatedly told him No.
2. Harassed, threatened, and stalked multiple women.
3. Orally expressed homicidal intent, including a desire to kill my husband and commit a mass shooting at a Scrabble tournament.
4. Published a written threat to commit explicit acts of physical violence.
5. Written and published a 164-page manifesto that intentionally discloses private information and documents his own acts of harassment.

What follows is a summary of Dave's relevant conduct in each of these areas. Attached is documentation to support the information provided in this report.

**I am separately reporting this information to the police. I have submitted this information under penalty of perjury, knowing that I could be disbarred as an attorney and lose my job if I knowingly make a false statement here.**

Some of the events in this report date back more than six years. I am reporting this information now because I recently learned that Dave has explicitly stated that he wants me dead, wants to kill my husband, and wants to shoot up a Scrabble tournament. I am particularly concerned about the safety risk to all members of the Scrabble community if Dave commits a mass shooting at a tournament.

I have not risked reporting Dave until now because I feared that reporting him would enrage and provoke him into committing an act of violence against me. Now that he is threatening the lives of other people, I believe I am obligated to report this information.

## **1. Sexual Coercion**

I first met Dave at a Scrabble tournament in 2013 or 2014. From 2014 through 2016, I casually dated Dave while I resided in Washington, D.C. and he resided in Falls Church, VA. Though this was not a committed relationship and he was not my boyfriend, he was controlling. He strongly discouraged me from having relationships with other men in the Scrabble community.

For two years, we had an intermittent, on-and-off consensual sexual relationship. On more than one occasion, however, he coerced me to have sex with him after I had explicitly told him that I did not want to have sex.

On one occasion that I remember vividly, I repeatedly and unambiguously told him that I did not want to have sex because I knew it would hurt. He responded by trying to pull my clothing off and fondle me. He didn't stop his advances despite me repeatedly saying I didn't want to have sex. After fighting his advances for thirty minutes, I got exhausted of telling him No and concluded that he would not stop until he got what he wanted. I stopped saying No and lay down defeated while he penetrated me. It hurt. I dissociated from my body and lay like a dead fish staring blankly up at the ceiling until he was done.

## **2. Harassment and Stalking**

I attempted to end my informal relationship with Dave on at least five occasions, the last attempt being in person in September 2016. About two months later, Dave started suspecting that I was dating another Scrabble player, and began to email and text me harassing messages. At that point, I had not seen him in months and we had not had any sexual relations for even longer. I was therefore baffled to learn that he regarded us as being in a relationship that required a breakup conversation before he would permit me to move on and date someone new.

On December 19, 2016, Dave sent me an email demanding that I meet with him (alone) in person. I was afraid of Dave's temper and what he might do if I met him in person. I had witnessed his anger before and endured him yelling at me many times during the time when we dated. In his email, he wrote, "I am not going to be angry or yell or argue or try to convince you to do things otherwise." Despite this promise, the speech Dave intended to give me in person—reprinted in full in his manifesto—is unmistakably angry and demeaning.

Because I did not accede to his demands, Dave then escalated his threats. Specifically, he threatened that he would publicly embarrass and humiliate me at an upcoming event in January 2017 if I did not give in to his demands. I found his communications disturbing and blocked his emails, phone calls, and text messages. I later learned when he published his manifesto that he continued sending harassing text messages to me after I blocked him, including a message on Christmas Day, 2016, stating, "I have been very upset and angry and sometimes filled with hatred because you have not taken down the Facebook profile picture of you on my balcony as I asked you to."

When I did face Dave in January 2017, I was terrified. I had shared Dave's email threats with the directors of the New Orleans tournament in advance because I was scared about what he might do. I was physically shaking with fear throughout my game against him. He writes in his manifesto that he delighted in watching me suffer in front of him. Immediately after the game, I walked into the hallway outside the playing room and started sobbing in a corner. This was the first time my now-husband saw me cry.

In September 2017, I moved across the country, in part to get far away from Dave. I relocated from Washington, D.C. to Tacoma, WA. Approximately six months later, Dave moved to Seattle, WA, taking up residence less than an hour's drive from my new home. Prior to moving to Seattle, Dave had lived in Virginia for many years. At the time that he moved, he had joint custody of a minor child who also lived in Virginia, which made his move seem all the more strange and alarming to me.

For the next few years, Dave communicated threats to me via third parties that he would make me regret it if I did not agree to talk to him and give him closure about our relationship. An example is the message I received from Steve Pellinen on December 16, 2019 (Attachment A). I received this message more than three and a half years after I had last been in anything resembling a relationship with Dave. By that point, I hoped that Dave had moved on. Instead, Dave's threats and harassment further escalated into his publication of a 164-page manifesto in July 2020. In his manifesto, described in more detail later in this report, Dave details his harassment of me, including his continuous attempts to contact me after I had blocked his communications.

Stalking is "A pattern of behavior directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for the person's safety or the safety of others, or suffer substantial emotional distress."

For years, I have experienced intense emotional distress and feared that Dave will try to hurt or kill me or my husband. I have specifically sought out therapists with specialized training in trauma counseling. I have spent hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars in therapy trying to overcome my fear of Dave. Three different therapists have each independently diagnosed me with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. I experience insomnia, nightmares of Dave attacking me, and flashbacks from the time I spent with him. When I see someone who looks like him, I at times become paralyzed by tonic immobility (freezing) and am unable to move.

To protect myself, I have invested substantial money in upgrading my home's security system. I subscribed to a video security surveillance service and replaced an exterior door in our home. I installed a peephole in our front door. Upon learning that Dave wants me and my husband dead and wants to shoot up a tournament, I immediately removed the street addresses for CoCo Scrabble tournaments posted online because I am afraid that Dave will try to physically attack me or other attendees at those events. I quit all social media and refrain as much as possible from posting any personal information or photos of myself online because I fear that Dave or a person sympathetic to his grievances will identify me and commit an act of violence. I knowingly sacrificed income by delaying the launch of a website for my small business because I knew I'd have to publish my name and photo online.

Separate from my own personal experience with Dave, I recently learned that he has harassed and stalked another woman within the Scrabble community. Her name is Lola McKissen. Lola told me that she dated Dave from approximately March through July of 2020. Lola stated in a recent letter to me that after her relationship with Dave ended, "it's been 2 years of me telling

him to leave me alone, and that I do not want to be friends with him. He tries again every couple months.”

In 2020 or 2021, Dave moved to Portland, OR, where Lola also lives. In January 2022, Dave confronted and threatened Lola in person at a Scrabble tournament in New Orleans, LA; more information about his threat to Lola appears in her letter (Attachment B). In her letter, Lola states that she fears Dave will kill her. Like me, she is also in trauma counseling as a result of her fear of Dave.

### **3. Homicidal Statements**

On March 1, 2022, Lola electronically sent me a letter. In her letter, she describes Dave as “unstable” and recounts how he would become angry and fly into a rage. She recounts that when she dated Dave in spring 2020:

“We lived together for 8 horrific weeks. Every night when he got tired he would turn into a whole other person and I’d have to lie there listening for hours and hours while he shouted about how much you and Evans deserved to die and how he would want to carry that out. Sometimes the people who needed to die were the people who must have told lies about him last time he noticed that people don’t like him, in DC. Sometimes it was his mother. Once it was a whole random tournament of Scrabblers he wanted to shoot down, because they didn’t stop you from lying about him or excluding him. At one point, every single person who voted for Trump deserved death. He was never in control of himself during any of this, and would even yell this way at himself in the shower.”

Lola summarizes, “I have listened to at least a hundred hours of insane murder fantasies, and I am not okay.” She concludes by noting, “I’m pretty sure he’s going to kill someone someday.”

Dave’s expressed desire to shoot down a tournament of Scrabble players is particularly concerning given that large Scrabble tournaments have hundreds of people in attendance. These mass events often take place in large, open hotel ballrooms with no security. A mass shooting of the kind that Dave has envisioned would be relatively simple to execute and difficult to prevent.

On March 2, 2022, Lola spoke with me by phone. She recounted that Dave had consistently told her that he wanted to kill my husband by hitting him in the head with a cast iron frying pan. When I noted that Dave had at least not taken active steps to kill me or my husband, she disagreed. Lola had contemporaneous conversations with Dave when he published his manifesto in July 2020. She relayed that Dave’s intent and expectation in publishing his manifesto was that he would so thoroughly humiliate me that I would kill myself.

Harassment is a crime. Among the conduct qualifying as harassment is to “maliciously do any act which is intended to substantially harm the person threatened with respect to his or her

physical or mental health or safety.” Harassers who post threatening messages online, or whose harassment resulted in their target’s suicide, have been convicted of felony harassment and imprisoned for years.

#### **4. Written Threat to Commit Violence**

Dave’s expressions of homicidal ideation are not his only threats of violence. Prior to publication of his manifesto in July 2020, Dave published several explicit posts on Facebook in which he threatened violence against another Scrabble player, Darrell Day. Among his many threats of violence are the following posts, which he publicly posted on Facebook:

“Darrell Day I hope we meet again. I have no desire for intelligent or thoughtful conversation. I just want to beat the living shit out of you.”

“If I bashed your fucking skull in, it would probably improve your brain, and your appearance.”

“After I bash your skull in and leave you bleeding on the ground, I’m gonna diarrhea in your fucking mouth and chop your balls off and stuff them in there too for good measure. And then take pictures and send them to your kids.”

Dave has admitted to authoring this post. He received a formal disciplinary warning from a national Scrabble association for threatening another member of the Scrabble community.

#### **5. Manifesto Disclosing Private Information and Documenting Harassment**

On July 15, 2020, Dave published online a 164-page manifesto (Attachment E) in which he disclosed my private information and documented his own acts of harassment. The manifesto details his perception of events that occurred primarily from 2015 through 2017. He also describes how he believes others have wronged him by causing him to become ostracized.

Dave published his manifesto as a two-part blog series, available online at <https://splenetic.net/>. Around the time when he published his manifesto, he wrote on his personal Facebook page, “I recognize that I am incredibly privileged. I had the financial resources to take a year off of work and better than average writing skills to help me tell my story effectively.”

##### *a. Disclosure of Private Information*

The information that Dave published in his manifesto includes direct reproductions of numerous private communications that I had shared with him under a full and reasonable expectation of privacy. In a Facebook post in July 2020, Dave provided the following justification for his decision to publish my private text messages in his manifesto:

“Several people have given feedback about me including text messages with Jennifer in the appendices. I have heard this feedback, and I thought deeply before I did it. You may feel differently, but let me say a few things about why I felt it was necessary.

The text messages corroborate many things in my story, including my mother's surgery, my flu and mouth sore outbreak, my inability to get games with anyone but Vince. The email exchange with Jennifer also corroborates my sexual dysfunction. I felt it was necessary to give contemporaneous evidence to show that I was not exaggerating any of this for sympathy. November 2016 was truly the worst month of my life, independently from anything happening with Jennifer. In comparison, there is very little personal detail about her contained in those messages.”

Contrary to his description of the information as containing “very little personal detail” about me, the messages that Dave published contain personal information about my location, employment, finances, mental health, political views, alcohol consumption, family, and sex life. He published all of this information without my knowledge or consent. Some people choose to disclose private information about themselves online; I do not. I am a private person who chooses not to use social media or publish personal information about myself, which makes his publication of my personal information all the more distressing.

*b. Harassment*

In his manifesto, Dave documents his own harassment of me. After emailing me on December 16, 2016, promising to not be angry or yell at me, here is how he describes his actual state of mind and his attempts to continue harassing me after I blocked his communications:

“I still wanted to tell her off for what she had done. I wanted to have that one last breakup conversation to create closure, but this time I didn't need to hear anything from her. I just wanted to communicate how unkind she had been in ghosting me and not taking the picture down, and I believed that I could say things in just the right way that would make her cry in front of me. This time I wanted to talk in person, because I wanted to see those tears on her face, and I knew that if we talked on the phone, she would just hang up on me. I also knew that if I asked her again for a meeting, she was highly likely to just continue ghosting me. So I decided I had to give her an incentive to make the meeting happen. I sent her one more email on January 5th, and I copied it to both of her email accounts, just in case she had blocked the one I used previously.”

In the email he sent me on January 5, 2017, he escalates his threats, writing:

“I think it would be best to have this conversation in private, but I no longer have any compunctions about holding back in front of other Scrabble players we know. So if you do not meet with me before New Orleans, I will say what I need to say to you directly to your face across the Scrabble board in the tournament room with all the other players

able to hear. I am almost certain that if that happens you will regret not having had this conversation in private.”

In his Facebook posts promoting publication of his manifesto, Dave writes:

“By the time I had gotten to the New Orleans tournament [in mid-January 2017], I was already in a much calmer place.”

Here is how his manifesto describes that “much calmer place,” as I sat across from him shaking with fear:

“I delighted in watching Jennifer suffer in front of me. She punished herself for her behavior in a better way than I ever could have. I saw it as karmic justice for how much pain she had caused me in the last couple months. But at the same time, I did not do it to her. She did it to herself. She did it by coming to a tournament where she already knew I was going to be, by insisting on not communicating with me prior to the tournament, by avoiding a conversation that would have made things better, by building up so much tension in her own head that just being there with me was such a terrible experience, even though I wasn’t doing anything.”

Back on Facebook, Dave responds to a commenter’s criticism that he is still dismissing his own “truly disturbing behavior,” writing:

“I’m not making light of it. I don’t deny that I handled things poorly and scared Jennifer.”

In one of his last posts about the manifesto in July 2020, Dave summarizes publication of his manifesto as follows:

“I do have toxic aspects of my personality and anger issues ... I exposed to the world the worst emails and text messages I sent at the worst moment in my life. I’m willing to be held accountable for them. I hope you’ll also recognize the bravery and the desire for self-improvement that was inherent in putting them out there.”

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## **Attachments**

- A. Message from Steve Pellinen, dated December 16, 2019
- B. Letter to me from Lola McKissen, transmitted electronically on March 1, 2022
- C. Facebook post published by Dave, threatening Darrell Day, published in 2020
- D. Facebook posts published by Dave acknowledging authorship of his manifesto and defending his decision to publish private information, published in July 2020
- E. Full text of Dave’s manifesto, also available online at <https://splenetic.net/>

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I CERTIFY UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON THAT THE FOREGOING IS TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

EXECUTED ON: March 24, 2022



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JENNIFER CLINCHY