

César Del Solar
September 5, 2022

To whom it may concern,

I have known Dave Koenig since around 2006 or 2007, shortly after I started playing Scrabble, and have considered him a friend since then. I have hosted him a few times in the various cities I lived in, I have met his friends, we've played Scrabble, gotten drinks, etc. for years. He was a guest at my wedding. We've even had a couple of disagreements that were quickly patched up.

I believe that he has been very wronged by the CoCo leadership, who have reacted far in excess to the admitted mistakes he made in communicating with Jennifer Clinchy back around 2016-2017 or so. As a result, he has been increasingly ostracized by the Scrabble community. He has documented all of this saga in a blog around then, replete with full conversations with all the relevant parties, and having read all of it, I still believe that it was a severe overreaction. I would also like to state that this appears to be a pattern with the CoCo leadership, and because my example is not directly related to this matter, I have attached it as an addendum to this letter.

As a result of this increasing ostracism and his anger to it, I understand that he expressed violent fantasies to Lola McKissen. I would like to posit that there is no one who wouldn't have violent fantasies after being subjected to this mistreatment, and that furthermore, there is a *very* large difference between "venting" in anger and actually making a plan and acting on these angry fantasies. There are jokes around going "postal" in major tv shows, movies, and throughout all media, and I strongly believe that Dave is not a violent person and would not do anything close to the fantasies he expressed to a trusted person in a moment of anger.

I would also like to state for the record that Lola is a good friend of mine and a team member of Woogles, and I have gotten to know her over the last couple of years of working in this capacity. She has expressed privately to me her misgivings about Dave, and the trauma she feels from their relationship, and I do believe that she feels traumatized and afraid of him. However, I don't believe that this merits Dave receiving a suspension from any major Scrabble organization in the country, and I also believe that he has enough documentation to make his point that Lola, perhaps unwittingly, misrepresented some aspects of their relationship. There have to be other solutions. At any given time a Scrabble gathering contains plenty of people who cannot stand each other, and we cannot ban people based on a popularity contest.

Finally, I'd like to state that all matters concerning myself or my application (Woogles.io) in Dave's "The Defense" document are accurate.

Sincerely,



César Del Solar

Addendum: Re: CoCo leadership's pattern of ostracism

My wife Mina Le and I have been subject to attempted ostracism ourselves from the CoCo leadership. I have been friends with Evans since 2007, and we have roomed together at tournaments, eaten together, etc. I have also been friendly with Jenn for years and have worked with her on Aerolith features for her tournaments, setting up their CoCo club and various tournaments on Woogles, and even building an entire new feature (WordSmog) for their Clabbers tournament. But during the time of Sam Kantimathi's suspension saga (around 2018-2019 or so), Evans and Jenn largely stopped communicating with my wife and me, despite the fact that we were all friends and had gone out to meals together in the past at tournaments. Jenn had taken umbrage to a private NASPA Advisory Board message that Mina had sent in support of not increasing Sam K's suspension further (which, by the way, was sent with her having incomplete information about his transgressions), and thus this means that we must both be unfriended.¹

One of our mutual friends spread this private AB message on a public forum (Facebook) in response to Mina's Rose Award win; it could only have come from a member of the advisory board at the time, and thus I know they have been spreading rumors about my wife. Several of our mutual friends barely speak to us anymore. Furthermore, we tried to have a video chat with Evans and Jenn to patch this up, in which Mina cried her heart out to them, apologizing for the message she had sent; but they still expressed in no uncertain terms that they (paraphrasing here) don't really want to be friends with people who don't have the exact same values that they do. I assume this means we must not be friends with Dave K if we want to be friends with Evans/Jenn. Additionally, when they started moving their online clubs/tournaments to using Woogles, they expressed to Conrad that they were uneasy with "César and Mina's involvement with Woogles" (Note that she is not at all involved with the platform other than being my wife, and I have only repeatedly helped them out with whatever they wanted in the past). Even despite all of this, we still played several of their online CoCo tournaments during the pandemic, and I built the above mentioned features for them. My wife and I repeatedly streamed ourselves playing their tournaments while they continued to avoid acknowledging us. I remember on at least two occasions we "raided" their stream with a couple of dozen watchers, to zero acknowledgement from them, when this is a standard courtesy.

I don't feel any anger about this – in fact, I feel sadness, hurt, and exclusion from not only the CoCo leadership, but from several of our mutual friends, due to their rumor spreading. The pandemic was already isolating enough, but it does not feel good to know that there are a number of people, including friends that I was very close to, that are spreading rumors about myself and my wife. I wish this could be patched up and the rift disappear, but I am merely writing it in support of my assertion that I have noticed a pattern of ostracism from the CoCo leadership with people that they do not like, and I believe this is happening again.

¹ Evans unfriended both of us on Facebook and he completely ignored a messages that my wife had sent to him about it. Evans and Jenn no longer speak to us nor do they even acknowledge my existence on forums like Twitch. Evans recently (within the last week) rudely insulted my wife, by saying, on a private Facebook Messenger thread, that all of the WESPA executive committee, with the exception of Chris Lipe, "sucks" and have their "heads permanently up their asses", for not granting them WESPAC 2023; this is despite the fact that, as I understand, they submitted their proposal several months after the deadline.