

September 9, 2022

To the NASPA Advisory Board:

I have read Dave Koenig's response dated September 6, 2022. In response, I reiterate the information in my prior statement dated March 24, 2022. Among the 90+ pages of Dave's new response is extensive, extraneous commentary that distracts from the key elements of the original complaint: Dave has been accused of sexual coercion, harassment, stalking, and making threats of physical violence. These are serious claims. I urge the Advisory Board to focus on these elements as they consider the safety of the Scrabble community and whether Dave is a positive addition to that community.

1. Sexual Assault and Reporting

Dave suggests that I fabricated the story of sexual coercion in April 2022. I did not. Nor did I wait until 2022 to report it for the first time. I reported it in detail to my therapist more than five years ago when I still lived in Washington, D.C. Shortly after Dave published his manifesto in July 2020, I contacted my former therapist. She confirmed that she still remembers my report, remembers Dave by name, and has maintained notes from the many sessions in which we discussed Dave's sexually aggressive behavior.

Separately, I had previously disclosed that I had been sexually assaulted in a report I submitted to NASPA more than four years ago, on August 5, 2018. Jason Idalski was the division director for a NASPA tournament I played. Attached is a copy of the email report I submitted to Jason.

Dave writes that he has "zero memory of any kind of sexual coercion." This is not surprising for a man with a pattern of sexually aggressive behavior toward women. When someone routinely acts sexually aggressive, he's not going to remember every encounter that constitutes assault because these encounters are not unusual or memorable for him.

Dave describes the time when Sarah's roommate, Kenny, accused Dave of taking advantage of Sarah while she was drunk. Dave told me about this incident in 2014, shortly after it happened. Specifically, he told me that it wasn't rape because both he and Sarah were very drunk when they had sex. When I asked how he could have been that drunk given that he had driven her home before having sex with her, he dismissed my question. I do not know Sarah, and I do not know what exactly transpired that night. I have thought about this incident many times, however, because I was so struck by Dave's inability to see that having sex with someone who may be too drunk to consent would not be okay, even if you're drunk yourself.

Dave writes in his response that I didn't confront him about his sexual aggression. I remember one occasion on which he called me a dirty whore and told me I deserved to be punished while he was in the act of having rough sex with me. After he finished, I told him to not do that again.

Researchers and social science experts have found that there are many reasons why victims don't confront their assaulters or report their sexual assaults to law enforcement. They may fear further violence. They may face death threats, gaslighting, intense misogyny, or be forced to evacuate their homes. They may be humiliated, be called sluts, or be blamed for being complicit in their own assaults. When they do report, they are often interrogated about wearing suggestive clothing, accused of inviting the attack by leading the man on, told that they liked rough sex, asked why they didn't scream or fight back, asked why they didn't report immediately, or told that they must be mistaken about the identity of their assaulter.

Like many women (and men), I never wanted to identify as a sexual assault victim or revisit that trauma by discussing with anyone what Dave did to me. That's one reason why I have not publicly named Dave before as someone who sexually assaulted me.

It has taken years and a lot of professional trauma counseling for me to understand and process what happened with Dave. I did not read books about sexual assault and trauma before I met Dave. Among the many books I've read since then to help myself recover are the following titles, which I recommend to anyone looking to learn more about sexual assault, abusive relationships, and why both reporting and leaving those relationships is so hard:

- The Gift of Fear, by Gavin de Becker
- The Body Keeps the Score, by Bessel van der Kolk
- Entitled, by Kate Manne
- Missoula: Rape and the Justice System in a College Town, by Jon Krakauer
- Nobody's Victim: Fighting psychos, stalkers, pervs, and trolls, by Carrie Goldberg
- Catch and Kill, by Ronan Farrow
- She Said, by Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey
- Believing, by Anita Hill
- Consent, by Vanessa Springora

2. Verbal Abuse and Rage

Dave cites several examples of me appearing to behave civilly toward him. Asking a player to even the field at a Scrabble club session is not an invitation to be in a relationship. I and many victims deliberately maintain communication with someone who has harmed us because we believe it's the best way to keep ourselves safe in the future. I hoped that by exchanging occasional friendly messages and behaving civilly toward Dave, he would not be angry with me.

Both Lola and I have witnessed Dave's explosive temper, and we both mention it in our reports. One example of Dave's verbal abuse toward me occurred in Perth, Australia, in November 2015. In his manifesto, Dave characterizes me asking Evans questions about where he grew up and what he does for work as flirtation. Dave was sitting next to me at the group dinner while I talked to Evans, whom I did not know well at the time. Dave then says:

I never spoke up or got upset or showed discomfort or displeasure with the situation at all during the dinner, except for the silent gesture to Cecilia that no one else noticed. After dinner I spoke to Jennifer while the two of us walked by ourselves. I believe my message got across to her about how hurtful her behavior was to me, maybe not right away, but the next day for sure.

Reading Dave's perception of his own behavior gave me chills. I remember that night very well, and Dave's description is wildly inconsistent with my recollection. He shows no awareness of the sheer rage he expressed toward me that night.

As that dinner in Perth progressed, I sensed that Dave was becoming jealous and angry that I was talking to Evans instead of paying attention to Dave. Dave claimed to be tired, and was uncharacteristically quiet. After the check came, he made it clear that it was time for us to leave. I remember thinking, with complete clarity: "He is furious with me. If I go back to our Airbnb with him, he is going to kill me."

I looked desperately at Jesse Day, remembering that during trip planning time, he had asked if I wanted to share a group house with several players. I seriously considered asking Jesse if I could crash on their couch so that I wouldn't have to go back to my Airbnb with Dave. In those seconds of panicked indecision, I couldn't see a way out. My stuff was at the Airbnb; Dave was standing and waiting for me

to leave with him. I had been playing Scrabble for only two years at that point. How could I explain to a group of people I barely knew that I needed to go home with them because Dave was about to fly into a rage?

Seeing no other option, I stepped outside with Dave. We walked in silence for just enough paces away from the restaurant door that we were out of earshot. And then he exploded. He unleashed a screaming torrent of verbal abuse, condemning my behavior as embarrassing. I tried, unsuccessfully, to calm him down. Other players at that event may have observed that after that night, I was subdued and quiet and held Dave's hand in public. I did so because I knew he was enraged at me and I did not want him to yell at or hurt me.

Dave and others have asserted that the published texts and emails don't constitute harassment or provide any legitimate basis for me to fear being around Dave or having him at tournaments I direct. What these people miss is the historical context of the preceding relationship. Lola dated Dave for two months, and that was enough to make her afraid that he might kill her. I dated Dave off and on for *two years*. It is the full history of that time with him, marked by repeated instances of sexual aggression with physical pain and unhinged verbal abuse, that made me afraid of him.

It is emotionally exhausting to live in fear. When I told Judy Romann that I didn't have a problem with Dave, I was desperately trying to convince *myself* that this was true. I didn't want to continue facing the distress, shaking, and fear that I experienced playing him in New Orleans. I thought that facing Dave in club—when I'd be free to leave at any time—might condition me to feel comfortable around him at tournaments. This type of exposure therapy in short-term, controlled settings can sometimes help people overcome specific fears, and that was my hope.

In *The Gift of Fear*, author Gavin de Becker observes that most women who are killed by partners are killed *after* leaving the relationship. He documents the following common warning signs of intimate partners who are likely to kill their former partner:

- Verbally abusive.
- Resolves conflict with intimidation and bullying.
- Uses threats and intimidation as instruments of control or abuse. Includes threats to harm physically, to defame, to embarrass, or to disclose secrets.
- Blames alcohol as an excuse for past bad behavior.
- Minimizes incidents of abuse.
- Blames others for his problems.

I observed all of these warning signs and more during my time with Dave. And that made ending relations with him difficult and terrifying to do.

3. Police Report

Lola's letter reporting that Dave wanted me and Evans dead made me fear for our lives. In particular, I was disturbed to hear that Dave expected publishing his manifesto would push me to kill myself. This point deserves emphasis. If you expect that taking an action is likely to kill someone, and you choose to do it, you have executed an intent to kill. Throughout Dave's manifesto and response, he claims that his goal is to simply share his story and tell the truth.

As I previously stated, it is a crime to post content online that results in the target's suicide. Some harassers point a gun at their victim. Others torment their victims so thoroughly with their words and actions that their victims kill themselves or take extreme steps to withdraw from the world and avoid their harasser. In my case, I moved across the country and blocked all communications from Dave, among many other steps I detailed previously.

Alarmed by Dave's statement that my husband and I deserve to die, I reported Dave's conduct to the Seattle Police Department on March 30, 2022. The police followed up on my initial report by having an officer interview me. I provided the police with the same information I provided to NASPA. The officer advised me that Dave had broken criminal laws prohibiting stalking, harassment, and sexual assault. As examples of Dave's criminal conduct, the officer cited Dave's sexual coercion, publication of the manifesto, the texts and emails he sent with threatening language, and Dave's own words describing his own conduct and intent.

The officer informed me that he was escalating the case to a detective for further investigation. He assured me that given the safety concerns, the police would not contact Dave unless they were sure that police contact would decrease the risk of violence, rather than increase it. The officer advised me to immediately call the police if I saw Dave, and to purchase a panic alarm to carry at all times.

The officer also asked what I wanted the police to do with my report. I did not ask the police to arrest or incarcerate Dave. I told them that I had filed the report because I was concerned he was going to hurt someone, and I wanted them to know who to investigate if I turned up dead.

NASPA and any member of the public can request a copy of the police report from the Seattle Police Department directly.

4. Initiation of Complaint

Evans and I did not initiate the March 2022 complaint to NASPA or any Scrabble organization. When Steve Pellinen received Lola's letter in his capacity as a WGPO director, he advised me that he sought to submit the information to Scrabble organizations because he believed Dave was dangerous. Steve is the one who initiated the complaint. I expressed great fear to Steve that reporting Dave's conduct would provoke a reaction from him, potentially a violent one. I continue to maintain that fear. Given that Lola's letter directly discussed me and Evans, I reluctantly concluded that I had to submit a statement.

Dave seems to think that I go around voluntarily choosing to talk about him and his harassment. I do not. Talking about the person who harassed, assaulted, and traumatized me is incredibly painful. It is the last topic I want to discuss, both publicly and privately. I don't raise his name in the presence of others. I walk away when others start talking about him. Given that I routinely work more than 65 hours a week, I do not choose to waste what little free time I have to spread rumors or wage a multi-year campaign of disparagement against anyone.

The fact that I am making this information public for the first time is evidence itself that I have not spent years disparaging Dave. If assassinating Dave's character was my aim, I could have disseminated this information years ago. He has already taken so much from me—my sense of safety, my trust in humans, my privacy, control over my body, and huge amounts of time and money spent in therapy and on security measures. I want nothing to do with him. I wish someone had warned me about him. I only hope that no one in the Scrabble community or anywhere else becomes his next target.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Clinchy

Subject: Incident report for Round 14 forfeited game

From: Jennifer Lee

Sun, Aug 5, 2018 at 2:29 PM

To: Jason Idalski

Hi Jason,

As requested, I am submitting information about why I chose to forfeit round 14. My assigned opponent was Sam Kantimathi. Multiple women in Scrabble have shared their personal stories alleging that Sam committed specific acts of sexual misconduct, including harassment and assault. I find their detailed accounts credible and understand that NASPA has investigated some of the claims against Sam. Months ago, I emailed Sam directly about the claims of sexual misconduct. He responded to my email, but did not address or refute the claims.

I did not forfeit the game lightly. Like so many women, I have been sexually assaulted in the past. I forfeited the game because I would find it intensely distressful to relive that trauma by playing against a man who has harassed and behaved disrespectfully towards women. I lament that the prior NASPA investigation did not conclude that Sam's character harms the Scrabble community and puts its players at risk. Thank you for your consideration.

- Jennifer Lee