

Out of respect to the legal process I have chosen to remain silent the last 8 months, knowing the accusations levied against me as a teenager were not accurate and would be proven to be not true. The extensive 6 month long investigation brought the prosecution to the conclusion I knew all along - this was not a child pornography case.

I had hoped this outcome would exonerate me and provide understanding. The reaction has been quite the opposite and created even more confusion, with people making judgments based only on the initial reports, which didn't tell the whole story.

My family and I emphatically believe child pornography should not exist in our world. I did not commit a crime of this nature. The facts of the investigation and the resolution show this. I hope this statement will bring clarity to all those who care to know the truth.

November 30, 2022, at the age of 19, detectives arrived early in the morning and started asking about my pornography use. I was totally compliant, I shared all my passwords, and hid nothing from them. They told me an image I shared online was potentially of an underage female. I was shocked, because I had found it on an easily accessible, legal site, and I was never looking for illegal material. The photo included only a portion of the female body, I had no reason to believe the photo might be illegal. Regardless, they arrested me on suspicion of possessing child pornography. As they put me in handcuffs I tried to process everything. It sounded like they believed I searched out and shared illegal pictures, but I knew that I had not.

I appreciate the thorough investigation done by authorities, which included forensic testing on all my devices. This investigation found no other images that were even questionable: No photos, no videos, no chats, no searches for inappropriate material, not one illegal activity. The State determined the items police originally arrested me for should not be prosecuted either, either because the people depicted appeared to be of age or because it was not clear.

A normal part of cases of this nature is to go through an extensive psychosexual evaluation. After a full day of evaluation and testing by a specialized doctor of 40+ years, the doctor determined I have no deviant characteristics, had normal interests as a teenager, and I'm in the lowest possible percentile for likelihood to commit a crime. My attorneys offered the prosecution that I could be evaluated by other experts for a second and even third opinion, knowing the results would be validated.

I know this cuts against the public narrative fueled by the arrest and headlines. It's easy to believe the worst about people and perpetuate it online. But the findings of this expert were reviewed by both the prosecution and court officials as complete, accurate and showing that I am not the person portrayed at the outset.

I know I did not commit the crime people assumed and maybe believed. I have learned the lesson of how quickly naive decisions can lead to catastrophic consequences. I'm sorry my family and friends have had to go through this unimaginable 8 months, their love and support throughout has been humbling and encouraging.

In spite of the police search finding nothing illegal on any of my devices and a clean psychiatric evaluation, the prosecution insisted on a low-level misdemeanor charge instead of dropping it entirely. The certainty of the plea, with no real consequences, is the best way to help me move forward to pursue a college degree, a football career and my life as a now 20-year-old.

The misdemeanor plea of "no contest" is not an admission of guilt and I was not adjudicated by the court, meaning there was no conviction. The police have returned all my devices, because they contain no illegal material. And the University of Florida has lifted the campus ban imposed during the investigation.

I understand that there are many who will never get past the original headlines, but for those who want to look at this objectively, I hope this will provide details to see the truth. I know with the continued love and support of those close to me—and hopefully some understanding by others—I'll have a chance at the life that I dreamed of and worked so hard for. I am determined to use my story to help others avoid the pitfalls of naive technology use.