

Your honor,

What has always separated America from the rest of the world has been its devotion to democracy, the rule of law and a willingness to settle grievances in an open and civil manner.

But this experience has shattered that for me.

That we have come to you today without any of the original charges truly makes me wonder why this wasn't settled in the first month. Or better yet, why the Smith's were so unwilling to confront Kelley or I face-to-face and instead chose to hide behind moralistic ideals and chose the heavy hand of the law to ultimately get us to this point.

In the end no one can claim victory, because everyone is losing.

The prosecution loses because they used the law to beat up Kate and my family instead of arbitrating a solution, when they always had the power to do so.

The State of Florida loses because it perpetuates laws that criminalize adolescent behavior, and after spending thousands of dollars to educate them, it then spends hundreds of thousands of dollars to warehouse them for decades in prisons.

How can we teach our children to respect and depend on the law... One year, one month, and four days ago my best friend was killed in a car accident because of a drunk driver. He roams Brevard County with complete freedom. No repercussions for ending a life more precious than you could ever imagine. Who is more of a threat to society? Our 19 year old daughter who fell in love and had a consensual high school romance or a man who chooses to drink, drive and recklessly run stop signs for a thrill?? How can I explain to our children the justice system is fair and honest? I still have no answer...

My family has lost nine months of our lives. My daughters have been treated to a nightmare in which they were bullied, frightened, depressed, angered, traumatized and in the end have lost faith and trust in friends and the community. Kelley, myself and our family has exhausted all avenues to defend ourselves, when the other side can just sit back and watch us suffer. In prosecuting Kate, the State prosecuted all of us.

Civility was a loser too. If you bothered to read the vile, horrible and misogynistic tweets from a band of homophobic, racist, haters that filled the news feeds of friends and supporters you would seriously wonder if they were describing my daughter Kate or a member of the Manson cult.

But it is Kate that has lost the most. And while she made some naive and terribly bad decisions, they are the same decisions that any teenager living in today's society might make. By taking this plea, she is accepting the responsibility for those decisions and I support and love her for it. For the next few years she must put her life on hold, to come to grips with the life altering trauma that all this anxiety has

produced.

From this day on, Kelley, myself, our family and thousands of others will work to get these laws changed, so that what happened here is never repeated. We need to be a nation of laws, but where the law serves to protect rather than destroy.

In the end, the Smith's lose the most. At least I know my daughter loves me unconditionally and is proud of the father I 'am.

Thank you your honor. God bless.

Sincerely,
Steven Hunt