

# **I'M INNOCENT! I DON'T NEED NO STINKIN' LAWYER!**

Written by: [Jeffrey Donald Kent](#)

Attorney licensed in California

I'm innocent! It wasn't me! I have an alibi! They can't prove it! I have heard them all, and many more. In over 18 years of practicing exclusively criminal defense, I have heard just about everything. You only get one shot at this, so hire the best lawyer you can afford! Now!

## **Innocence is a Strong Word**

Innocent? Such a strong word. I prefer "Not Guilty." One can be entirely not guilty, or may be guilty of a less serious charge, or one may be guilty, but the government is going to be hard pressed to prove it. It would be unwise to make the decision in regards to how to handle your case without legal representation. Most people do not know or understand the elements of the charge to know whether they should worry or not. Or, whether they are or are not guilty of the charge. This is a criminal matter and you could go to jail or prison! The old adage, "He who represents themselves has a fool for a client," well, it's true! Not only is it likely you're not a lawyer, and don't know the laws or rules of evidence, but it is difficult to remain objective, and make the appropriate decisions along the way. Is it to your advantage to say nothing, and let your lawyer deal with the matter? Is it appropriate to cooperate with the investigating agency?

## **How To Handle the Investigation**

It may be in your best interest to actually cooperate in an investigation. I recently represented a young man being investigated for forcible rape. After lengthy consultations with the client it was determined that the government would be able to prove intercourse occurred, so we decided it would be best to cooperate in the investigation. We were successful in convincing the government that although my client, 22 years of age, had unlawful intercourse with a 16 year old, that the act was in fact consensual. Instead of facing felony forcible rape charges that would require sex registration for life, the charge was unlawful intercourse and my client received house arrest, no registration and the ability to earn a misdemeanor in 18 months! Sometimes admitting to a small crime in order to convince the government you didn't commit the more serious crime is the right thing to do. Other times it is best to just remain silent! You need a lawyer to help decide what is right for you!

## **Additional Resources**

There are many resources to help you find skilled lawyers that specialize in your area of need. Here are a few:

[Lawyers.com](#)

[Martindale-Hubble](#)

[National Association of Criminal Defense Attorneys](#)