

Report of Dr. Ronald E Hopson
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A. Introduction & Summary

I was engaged by counsel for Prince Hamlet of Denmark to examine the Prince and to determine whether, at the time of the events leading to the death of Polonius, the Prince was suffering from any mental disorder that would have resulted in either or both his inability to appreciate the wrongfulness of his conduct or his inability to conform his conduct to the law. After a thorough examination and extensive review of the record in this case applying both my education, training and experience dealing with hundreds of patients, teaching well over 500 students over twenty eight years as a professor of psychology, and conducting many studies, and publishing more than 15 articles in peer reviewed journals, I have concluded that Prince Hamlet did indeed suffer from severe Bi-Polar Disorder, with classic episodes of both manic and depressive behavior. In addition, because I am also an ordained minister and pastor, I was able to review the Prince's words and actions with reference to his and his family's religious observance to ensure that those words and actions were not merely such observances, and, indeed, I conclude that his words and actions actually contradict his religious background. This only confirms that the mental illness was real and severe.

Reference to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (Fifth Edition) confirms this diagnosis and provides a reference to literally textbook symptoms of this mental illness. Because of his severe illness, I conclude that Prince Hamlet could not and did not appreciate the wrongfulness of his conduct when he whirled around to a noise in his mother Queen Gertrude's chamber, and impulsively killed Polonius and that

he did not have the faculties to conform his conduct before, during and even after the killing to the requirements of the law.

In addition, I examined the Prince and the record to insure that he was not feigning or malingering this condition. As he exhibits the symptoms at times before he would have reason to or did announce any intention to put on an illness, and because he exhibits symptoms that would not be explained by any such statement, it is my conclusion that these symptoms are real and reflect an actual illness.

B. Diagnosis

Severe Bipolar I Disorder - DSM pp. 125 - 139, Code: 296.43-44

Symptoms:

Manic Episode:

- (1) Inflated self-esteem or grandiosity
- (2) Decreased need for sleep
- (3) More talkative than usual/pressured speech
- (4) Flight of ideas
- (5) Distractibility
- (6) Increase in goal-directed activity
- (7) Excessive involvement in adverse consequence activities

Depressive Episode:

- (1) Depressed mood
- (2) Marked diminished interest or pleasure in all, or almost all, activities
- (3) Insomnia
- (4) Psychomotor agitation
- (5) Feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt
- (6) Recurrent thoughts of death or recurred suicidal ideation

C. Examination/Record Evidence

Among the clear indications of Prince Hamlet manic episodes are: his belief that he was on special assignment as heaven's messenger to avenge the death of his father

(Act 1, Scene 5); his almost constant bantering, punning, joking and theatrical speech (examples exist through Acts 1 - 4); his complaint of insomnia (Act 2 and Act 5); his psychomotor agitation (childlike and silly behavior - Acts 2 - 4); and his inappropriate sexual preoccupation (even with words to his mother - especially Act 3). Equally clear examples of his depressive state are: his marked diminished interest in pleasure and feelings of worthlessness (Act 2); his ideation about suicide (Act 3); and his propensity for anger and violence (Acts 2 - 5).

I should note that an important diagnostic tool in these types of illnesses is whether those who know a person best see that he or she has changed or is changing and exhibits the symptoms. His family and friends observe and comment on the classic symptoms of his illness (Act 2-4), and all who have contact with him, in their views and statements, conclude he is indeed “mad.”

D. Treatment & Conclusion

As Prince Hamlet lacked the capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of his conduct or to conform his conduct to the requirements of the law, he was not responsible for his conduct. Therefore, he lacked the intent required in any crime and should not be criminally prosecuted. Instead, he should be treated for his serious mental illness with the excellent facilities we have in Denmark.