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REPORT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION

CONFIDENTIAL - FOR PROFESSIONAL USE ONLY

NAME: Kevin Eric Saunders

REFERRED BY: Ezra G. Sherman, Esq.

DATE OF BIRTH: 5/1/56

REPORT BY: Norman J. Lesswing, Ph.D.

DATES TESTED: 5/30/97

DATE OF REPORT: 6/14/97

BACKGROUND AND REFERRAL ISSUES:

Kevin Saunders is a 41-year-old white male who has been charged in Tompkins County with Burglary in the Second Degree, Arson in the Third Degree, Criminal Mischief in the Second Degree, and Criminal Contempt in the First Degree, surrounding his reportedly having set fire to the residence of his former paramour, Susan Hamann, early on the morning of February 6, 1997. In view of Mr. Saunder's history of psychiatric disorder and treatment and indication of his bizarre mental status around the time of the Offense, the undersigned was contacted by Attorney Ezra Sherman to perform a psychological evaluation, in order to assess whether Mr. Saunders might qualify for an exculpatory defense under Statute 40.15 of the New York State Penal Code, on the basis of his psychiatric dysfunction.

PROCEDURES:

Pursuant to this evaluation, Mr. Saunders was psychologically examined at my offices on May 30, 1997, including extensive clinical interview; administration of: the Shipley Institute of Living Scale, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory - 2, and the Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory - II; and review of records, including: legal documents, past treatment records, and Mr. Saunders' voluminous personal writings. Efforts to contact his former paramour, Susan Hamann, were unsuccessful.

SUMMARY OF HISTORY RELEVANT TO THE INSTANT OFFENSE:

Mr. Saunders reported a family history positive for psychiatric disorder, substance abuse, and neurological illness. He described himself as "high-strung" since childhood, with problems with hypersensitivity, anxiety, and neuropathic traits, such as nail biting, hair chewing and pulling, bed wetting, and sleep walking. His sexual identity, since adolescence, is that of a transgender lesbian and he has engaged in transvestitism for 25 years. He was an excellent student and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa at the University of Texas where he graduated in 1977. He attended graduate school in economics at Cornell University briefly in 1979. His career has been in computer programming

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and he is the president of his own company, "Databeast, Inc." Mr. Saunders was married and has a young adolescent daughter from that relationship, which ended in the early 1990's. He and his wife experimented with an "open marriage" and he reportedly was homosexually raped by her lover. He also harbored intense, delusional fears of having contracted HIV from her. He met his recent paramour, Susan Hamann, who was a friend of his former wife, in 1993. He described a passionate and stormy relationship with her and claimed that she had Posttraumatic Stress Disorder from childhood sexual abuse, which led her to "see me as the enemy." Mr. Saunders had no legal history until late in 1996 when, in the wake of his deteriorating relationship with Ms. Hamann, he started to exhibit increasingly bizarre behavior.

His history of psychiatric treatment includes involvement with Cornell University EAP in 1990, comprising about twelve outpatient counseling sessions. In 1993, he received outpatient psychiatric treatment from Dr. Anna Matusiewicz, who diagnosed him with Bipolar Disorder. In 1996 through the end of January 1997, Mr. Saunders had outpatient treatment at Family and Children's Service in Ithaca, in order to deal with symptoms of anxiety and depression and relationship difficulties. It should be noted that he has abused alcohol and has a 20-year history of Cannabis Dependence, which he legitimates on the basis of the alleged therapeutic efficacy of marijuana in calming his recurrent anger and agitation. Mr. Saunders was terminated from services at Family and Children's Service on January 30, 1997, with recommendation that he seek inpatient treatment for his chemical dependency problems. At that time, there was indication of increasing paranoia and delusional thinking by Mr. Saunders, with his perception of himself as a pawn in conspiracies involving his paramour.

Mr. Saunders also has been preoccupied with a host of different physical symptoms and complaints throughout life, which he has described in considerable detail. During January 1997, he developed and presented a panoply of strange and varied somatic and quasi-neurological symptoms, which he staunchly believes to have an organic basis, while physicians consulted by him attributed them to psychiatric causes.

Late in 1996, his relationship with Ms. Hamann became increasingly turbulent and they briefly separated. On December 22, 1996, he was arrested for a DWI and became extremely agitated, distraught, and paranoid, with claims that he had been "set up." He also reported that the police officer who had been following his car was "crawling up my butt," which reactivated traumatic associations to his homosexual rape. On December 29, 1996, he stated that he was falsely accused of rape by Susan Hamann, and was charged with Harassment and possession of a weapon.

During the next two months, he became increasingly preoccupied with apparent somatic delusions. Mr. Saunders also was preoccupied with Susan Hamann and "what the hell she was up to," since he was not allowed contact with her due to an Order of Protection. He resumed smoking marijuana, which he had stopped for a time, around the middle of January of this year, in order to calm his mind which had become "unpleasantly crowded."

On February 3, 1997, he started to read *The Silence of the Lambs*, and became embroiled in a complex web of delusional thinking, including gathering of evidence that the main character of the book, Clarice Starling, was based upon his girlfriend, Susan Hamann. He also believed that the character of Hannibal Lecter was based on a real person (which he later, through research, established as John Money, Ph.D., a noted researcher in the area of human sexuality), with a conviction that Hannibal Lecter had threatened to cause Armageddon through release of anthrax virus.

CLINICAL INTERVIEW AND BEHAVIORAL OBSERVATIONS:

Kevin Saunders, who is also known as bonz blayk, arrived late for his appointment, and acknowledged that he had used marijuana early that morning. Indeed, he described a maintenance use of marijuana with frequent, daily consumption, which he claims helps him to focus and maintain emotional equilibrium. Mr. Saunders presented as

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a moderately short white male who was dressed casually in dark clothing and had very long, dark hair. He was open

about his gender issues, in terms of his identification of being a lesbian-transsexual, reflecting his sense of being a woman inside of a man's body who prefers sexual relations with women. He established good rapport and was fully cooperative with the assessment. Mr. Saunders displayed a responsive, rather dramatic range of affect which was incongruent with his dysphoric mood. His speech was marked by extreme logorrhea and a stylized presentation with frequent inflection of "uh" or "eh" at the end of sentences. His thought processes revealed a great deal of ideational overactivation with intellectualized, circumstantial thinking, tangentiality, and difficulty reaching thought goals. He described auditory hallucinations around the time of the Instant Offense, which are no longer evident. However, he continues to report delusional thinking, while some of the more severe delusions concerning Hannibal Lecter have abated. He remains somatically preoccupied with self-diagnosis of a variety of arcane neurological conditions. However, he did describe behavior consistent with Temporal Lobe Epilepsy Interictal Syndrome, which nonetheless has not been formally diagnosed. These symptoms include hypergraphia, abundantly evident from his documentation; hyperreligiosity; "stickiness" in terms of his chronic tendency to prolong interpersonal interactions; problems with anger; altered sexuality; and a host of emotional, somatic, and psychiatric symptoms which may be related to Temporal Lobe Epilepsy.

In summary, Mr. Saunders presented as a highly intelligent, self-absorbed, and bizarre individual who is prone to develop extraordinarily complex delusional systems of thought and belief, about which he becomes absolutely logically convinced.

MENTAL STATE AT THE TIME OF THE OFFENSE:

After reading the *Silence of the Lambs* for three days, Kevin Saunders became totally convinced that he was involved in a plot orchestrated by Hannibal Lecter, which he was drawn into because Susan Hamann was actually Clarice Starling. Furthermore, he believed that Hannibal Lecter, who had escaped from prison in the book, was threatening the end of the world with anthrax. Mr. Saunders described "reeking piles of symbolism" which pervaded his mental experience and produced a myriad of associations and connections between him and Clarice Starling/Susan Hamann and Hannibal Lecter. He stated that he was "pretty much freaking out" and was experiencing incredible stress and a desperate wish to contact Susan Hamann in order to find out "what the hell is going on." On February 6, 1997, he reported hearing auditory hallucinations, together with songs on the radio which provided "interpretive cues" as to what Hannibal Lecter wanted him to do, in order to prevent release of the deadly anthrax. Indeed, he continued to respond to these "cues" while feeling "sheer terror." Mr. Saunders stated that he was "supposed to do something, and I would be judged on how well I did it -- everyone was in terrible danger." His task was to "figure out a diabolical puzzle" and this led him to go to Ms. Hamann's residence. The radio give him advice about how to break in. He saw a cutout of a hand with three fingers, which he interpreted as a message that he was going to get surgically altered. He also saw a can of shellac or paint thinner, and recalled thinking "that's what I'm supposed to do." He experienced himself as a "rat in a maze who arrived at the end of the tableau." He poured out the paint thinner, lit it, and was "in extreme panic" while at the time "perfectly persuaded." Mr. Saunders stated that he "just did" the action of the arson, with no reflection. He continued to experience a delusional belief that his actions and events around him were being orchestrated by Hannibal Lecter, to the point of his arrest and for some time into his incarceration. He claimed that he had a telepathic conversation with Hannibal Lecter while in jail and also heard people being tortured and electrocuted.

However, by the time of my interview with Mr. Saunders, he was able to recognize that his actions were "stupid -- it was wrong because I was mistaken." He no longer believes in the complex of delusions surrounding Hannibal Lecter and the anthrax, but continues to believe that there is a connection between Susan Hamann and Clarice Starling and that the character of Hannibal Lecter is fashioned after Dr. John Money.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL TEST FINDINGS:

Consistent with clinical impressions, Mr. Saunders performed extremely well on the Shipley Institute of Living Scale. He obtained a perfect score on measures of abstract reasoning and vocabulary, and it is likely that his intellectual functioning falls in the Very Superior range.

He produced a valid Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory - 2 profile, which contained no indications of malingering. Nearly all clinical scales were markedly elevated ($T > 65$), and he showed symptoms consistent with psychosis involving bizarre ideation and paranoid thinking. He shows a great deal of hypersensitivity and problems with anger. There is a mixture of anxious agitation and depressive dysphoria. Mr. Saunders also experiences extreme somatic preoccupation, which may take on delusional characteristics. He obtained an elevated raw score of 28 on the MacAndrew Addiction - Revised Scale, consistent with problems with chemical dependency. Thus, symptoms reported on the MMPI-2 were highly consistent with his clinical history and self-report.

On the Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory - II, Mr. Saunders did not show signs of Antisocial Personality Disorder and his behavior in the arson therefore does not appear to be related to fundamental criminal inclinations within his characteristic pattern of personality adjustment.

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

On the basis of information obtained within the present evaluation, it is my professional opinion that Kevin Saunders suffered from a severe mental disorder on February 6, 1997, at the time of the Instant Offense, such that his capacity for rational deliberation, judgment, and insight were grossly impaired by psychotic disturbance, including paranoid delusions and hallucinations. As a result, he lacked the capacity to realistically understand what he was doing and to appreciate the consequences of his behavior.

Thank you for referring Kevin Saunders for psychological evaluation. Please contact me if there are any questions regarding my report or if I may be of further assistance in this matter.

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