
Psychological Evaluation of John Jason McLaughlin

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Evaluee: John Jason McLaughlin

Date of Birth: July 19, 1988

Place of Evaluation: Prairie Lakes Detention Center, Willmar, Minnesota.

Date of Evaluation: December 03, 2004 and December 31, 2004

Date of Report: March 8, 2005

Identification and Purpose of Report:

John Jason McLaughlin, who will be referred to as Jason McLaughlin, is now a 16-year-old boy who resides at the Prairie Lakes Detention Center, currently awaiting trial on multiple charges of murder and assault for his role in the deaths of two fellow students at Rocori High School in Cold Spring, Minnesota on September 24, 2003. Jason McLaughlin has resided at Prairie Lakes Detention Center since his arrest on September 24, 2003. On that day, Jason McLaughlin shot two Rocori High School students who died as a result of their wounds. Jason was 15 years and 2 months at the time of the shooting.

The purpose of this report is to render an opinion with regard to Jason McLaughlin's competency to stand trial for the alleged offenses and to render an opinion with regard to Jason McLaughlin's mental state at the time of the commission of the offenses in accordance with Minnesota Rules of Criminal Procedures 20.01 and 20.02. The fol-

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lowing evaluation addresses the MN Criminal Statute Rule 20.01 to determine whether Jason McLaughlin is mentally ill or mentally deficient so as to be incapable of understanding the proceedings, or whether he is incapable of participating in his defense. The test of whether Jason McLaughlin is competent to stand trial will address whether he has sufficient present ability to consult with his lawyer with a reasonable degree of rational understanding and whether he has a rational as well as factual understanding of the proceedings against him.

The purpose of this report is to render an opinion with regard to Jason McLaughlin's mental state at the time of the commission of the offenses. This opinion will be directly related to the Minnesota Statute Rules for Criminal Procedure, Rule 20.02. This opinion will focus on whether because of mental illness or deficiency Jason McLaughlin at the time of the commission of the offenses charged was laboring under such a defect of reason as not to know the nature of the act constituting the offense with which he is charged or that it was wrong.

Jason McLaughlin is charged with six separate offenses.

I Charge: Murder in the first degree (Premeditated).

The charge states that on or about September 24, 2003, at Cold Spring, MN in Stearns County, John Jason McLaughlin did unlawfully, wrongfully cause the death of a human being, Seth David Bartell, with premeditation and with intent to effect the death of Seth David Bartell, while having in possession or using a firearm, a 0.22 caliber automatic pistol, at the time of the offense.

Maximum penalty: Life

II Charge: Murder in the second degree (Intentional).

John Jason McLaughlin on or about September 24, 2003, at Cold Spring, MN in Stearns County, did unlawfully, wrongfully cause the death of a human being, Seth David Bartell with intent to effect the death of Seth David Bartell, while having in possession or using a firearm, a 0.22 caliber automatic pistol, at the time of the offense.

Maximum penalty: Not less than three years nor more than 40 years imprisonment.

III Charge: Murder in the second degree (felony murder).

John Jason McLaughlin on or about September 24, 2003, at Cold Spring, MN in Stearns County, did unlawfully, wrongfully cause the death of a human being, Seth David Bartell, without intent to effect the death of Seth David Bartell, while committing or attempting to commit a felony offense, assault in the second degree, while having in possession or using a firearm, a 0.22 caliber automatic pistol, at the time of the offense.

Maximum penalty: Not less than three years nor more than 40 years imprisonment.

IV Charge: Murder in the second degree (felony murder).

John Jason McLaughlin on or about September 24, 2003, at Cold Spring, MN in Stearns County, did unlawfully, wrongfully cause the death of a human being, Aaron Michael Rollins, without intent to effect the death of Aaron Michael Rollins, while committing or attempting to commit a felony offense, assault in the second degree, while having in possession or using a firearm, a 0.22 caliber automatic pistol, at the time of the offense.

Maximum penalty: Not less than three years nor more than 40 years imprisonment.

v Charge: Assault in the second degree.

John Jason McLaughlin on or about September 24, 2003, at Cold Spring, MN in Stearns County, did unlawfully, wrongfully assault Mark Johnson with a dangerous weapon, a 0.22 caliber automatic pistol, while having in possession or using a firearm, a 0.22 caliber automatic pistol, at the time of the offense.

Maximum penalty: Not less than three years nor more than seven years imprisonment, and/or \$14,000 fine.

VI Charge: Possession of a dangerous weapon on school property.

John Jason McLaughlin on or about September 24, 2003, at Cold Spring in Stearns County, did unlawfully, wrongfully knowingly possess a dangerous weapon, a 0.22 caliber automatic pistol, on school property, Rocori High School.

Maximum penalty: Two years imprisonment and/or \$5000 fine.

Evaluation Procedures:

Jason McLaughlin was evaluated at the Prairie Lakes Detention Center on December 3, 2004 and December 31, 2004. At the beginning of the evaluations, the purpose of the evaluation was discussed with Jason McLaughlin. He had an understanding that the purpose of the evaluation was for court purposes but he had no clear understanding or idea as to why he was being evaluated. He knew that the evaluation was a “psych” evaluation. He did not know the word psychological or psychiatric. Jason McLaughlin did know that he was certified to stand trial as an adult and that because he was certified as an adult to stand trial that he could get an adult sentence. Jason McLaughlin understood that I was requested to evaluate him by his attorney, Daniel Eller, and by his parents David and Mary McLaughlin. Jason McLaughlin understood that what we spoke about would not be confidential.

In addition to the two interviews at the Prairie Lakes Detention Center on December 3, 2004 and December 31, 2004, Mary and David McLaughlin were interviewed and multiple sources of information were reviewed in the preparation of this report. Information was provided from Mr. Eller including: the certification hearing evaluations by the psychologists Drs. Cranbrook, Gilbertson and Carten, the videotape and transcript of Jason’s statement to investigator McDonald on September 24, 2003, other statements obtained by investigators and emails and handwritten notes found after Jason’s arrest. Treatment records from February through May 2004 by Richard Lentz, M.D. and Bryan Bergh, M.D. were also reviewed. Prairie Lakes Detention Center behavioral logs were reviewed and the Director was interviewed along with the Prairie Lakes School Program Coordinator.

Current Functioning and Review of Symptoms:

Jason McLaughlin is currently housed at the Prairie Lakes Detention Center in Willmar, MN. At the present time, he is one of their longest-term residents due to the nature of his charges. He has had few disciplinary difficulties while at the Prairie Lakes Detention Center. However, he has been noted by the staff to be socially isolated and to interact only when necessary. Jason has been noted to be quiet and to display some odd behav-

iors, which include staring intently at the other residents and laughing and smiling for no apparent reason. He has been admonished on multiple occasions for his intense staring, but even after this behavior is discussed with him he will stare at the other residents through his hands over his eyes by looking through his fingers at the other residents. This is especially apparent during the school day and was noted by Barb Heinen, the program coordinator for the Prairie Lakes School. Jason McLaughlin's behavior and participation has earned him a level 3 of a possible 3 levels, which he will sometimes lose and then gain again. Levels are obtained by performing activities of daily living on time and getting points for doing chores. He is observed to have difficulty with motivation and doing what is expected of him without direct staff intervention. Jason had a recent disciplinary problem on December 11, 2004. The event involved his being placed in segregation in an isolation cell. Apparently, Jason refused to leave an office room after he was asked to leave. Jason had just been told to do a written assignment based on a comment he had made involving a racial issue. Jason's description of his understanding of that event was that he said, "That is not right," during a discussion about the race of the niece of a staff member. The niece was described as black and the staff member is white. When Jason was asked to do a written assignment based on his comment, he swore at the staff and he began to fight with them after he was made to leave the room. Jason stated that he did not understand the assignment and he did not understand why his comment was considered inappropriate.

Jason McLaughlin is currently suffering from many psychotic symptoms. His psychiatric symptom history will be discussed in a separate section of this report. At the time of this evaluation, he experiences visual hallucinations, olfactory hallucinations (smelling), and auditory hallucinations. He has experienced tactile hallucinations intermittently. Jason describes having a figure/person appear to him in December 2003. Prior to then, the figure only spoke to him and did not appear. This person, whom he calls "Jake," accompanies him throughout his day and talks to him. "Jake" tells Jason to do things such as to disobey the staff or misbehave or swear at the staff. Jason describes attempting to ignore Jake. He states that if he does not do what Jake says, he will then feel depressed, sad and tired, but he tries to ignore him anyway. In late December 2004, Jason began to see hanging dead bodies from the bathroom ceiling. These dead bodies began to smell. Jason reasons that only he experiences these visions and smells because if the staff had experienced them, then they would definitely notice the smell. Jason hides these experiences from the staff because he believes that they would "think I am weird or they would not believe me." Jason has experienced auditory hallucinations since the sixth grade. At the present time, he describes feeling depressed. He has suicidal thoughts almost daily. He has made plans for suicide and he has threatened suicide. He is frequently on "suicide watch" at the Prairie Lakes Detention Center.

Jason experiences paranoid thoughts concerning most people that interact with him. He believes that the other boys at the Prairie Lakes Detention Center try to trick him. He appears to over-interpret normal game-playing as their attempts to trick him. He describes his paranoid beliefs concerning the other residents as they will try to get him to "take a deal that is very unfair" while playing cards and monopoly. He describes the other boys as "trying to mess with my head." Jason has experienced paranoid thoughts concerning his current treating psychiatrist Dr. Richard Lentz. He believes that Dr. Lentz is attempting to get him to take higher doses of medications in order to earn more

money. He bases this belief on Dr. Lentz possessing a coffee cup with the name of an antidepressant printed on it. Jason believes that his attorney is attempting to get him to take medication so that he will appear more cooperative to the prosecutor. During the Dec. 4, 2004 evaluation, Jason stated that he did not want to make his experience of Jake or his thoughts known to me because he was concerned that this would result in his getting more medications which would physically hurt Jake.

Jason has a grandiose view of himself and how he is performing in the academic program at the Prairie Lakes Detention Center School. He believes that he is performing like an eleventh or twelfth grader, especially regarding his knowledge-base. He states this is because he knows how to make “things” such as a hydroelectric dam. He believes that if he were in a regular school, he would also be a lot smarter than the classes that are provided. This information is in direct contradiction to the information regarding his performance at the Prairie Lakes School which will be discussed in the academic section of this report.

Jason exhibits compulsive behaviors that involve poking himself with paper. He makes himself feel the sharp edge of rolled or folded paper because it makes him feel better. He has exhibited this behavior since his incarceration and he reports doing it before his arrest.

Jason McLaughlin has been noted by the staff of the Prairie Lakes Detention Center to make grandiose statements about his family. It is documented that he told the other residents that his family is very wealthy, that they have three automobiles including a Hummer, a Cadillac, and a sports car, and they also have a lake cabin in addition to their very expensive home. There is no truth to these claims about the family’s wealth as Jason’s father is a deputy sheriff and his mother is a laborer in a factory.

Psychosocial History:

Jason McLaughlin was born on July 19, 1988. He is the only child of Mary and David McLaughlin, who were married in December 1985. Jason has five half-siblings by his parents. David McLaughlin, Jason’s father, is 46 years old and is employed by the Stearns County Sheriff’s Department. David McLaughlin has worked in law enforcement for the past 21 years since 1987 and in the last 14 years he has been in narcotics enforcement. Mary McLaughlin, Jason’s mother, is 44 years old and is employed at the Golden Plump Factory in Cold Spring, MN for over 14 years. At the time of his arrest, Jason was living with both of his parents in Cold Spring, MN. He has lived in Cold Spring all of his life except for a six-month period when his parents were separated in 2000. During the marital separation, Jason lived with his mother in an apartment in St. Cloud, MN.

Both of Jason’s parents were married previously and this is their second marriage. Jason’s father, David, was married for six years prior to his divorce and has three children; David (Josh) McLaughlin, age 26 who lives in St. Paul, MN, and Jini McLaughlin, age 21, and Jackie McLaughlin, age 24, both of whom live in Tennessee. Jason’s contact with these two half-sisters has been limited because they lived in Tennessee and visited their father during the summers. Jason has two half-siblings on his mother’s side. His mother was previously married for approximately four years. Mary has two children by her first marriage who were raised in the home of David and Mary McLaughlin; their

names are Brien Buckentine, age 24, and Keisha Buckentine, age 22. Brien and Keisha live independently.

Jason's birth and early childhood development has been described by his mother as normal with no birth trauma or difficulties and no major illnesses or injuries throughout his childhood. Jason was described as quite close to his mother and almost a "momma's baby." Jason started school on time and reached developmental milestones within the normal timeframes. When Jason was in the sixth grade in the year 2000, his mother and he lived in an apartment in St. Cloud, Minnesota. He is described at that time as becoming more argumentative. This was attributed by his mother to the stress of the marital separation. It appears that at that time Jason became more protective of his mother. After his parents reunited, Jason feared them separating again. Jason states that it is for this reason that he maintained secrecy from his parents about his inner experiences including the onset of his auditory hallucinations in the sixth grade. He did not want to cause them trouble or stress that might result in marital problems.

Jason's interests outside of school included making "things." He describes making explosives such as bombs. He is unclear as to the sophisticated nature of what he made but he was, as he describes, responding to a voice in his head telling him to try to make or build bombs using gunpowder from shotgun shells, wires, and a test tube from school. Jason is fascinated with the idea of becoming a military specialist in explosives. Jason's description of this interest appears immature and out of touch with what is necessary for such a career because he described believing that he no longer needed schooling. Jason's interests include snowmobiling with his family, especially his older brother Brien, and playing card and board games with his family. He attempted to try out for football in the seventh grade but he experienced blackouts when he exerted himself. He never told anybody about those blackouts. Jason became socially isolated in the seventh and eighth grade and especially during the summer of 2003 before he started high school. Jason's parents were unaware as to the severity of his social isolation because Jason would report doing activities that he now says he made up in order for them to think that he had friends. Jason was helpful with household tasks; in particular, he cooked meals during the week. Jason acknowledges that he was trying to keep the stress down in his mother's life by helping her with the cooking. He enjoyed spending time with his mother shopping for groceries and doing errands.

Jason became familiar with firearms through his father. His father enrolled him in a gun safety program and Jason passed the Minnesota Fire and Arm Safety training examination. Jason's father watched for, but did not observe, signs of irresponsible or overzealous interest on the part of Jason toward firearms. He thought that Jason approached weapons and target practice with an appropriate amount of caution and respect.

Records indicate that Jason began to have an interest in a female Rocori student named Brittany Kelly. Jason's email log-in name was "sharpestshot290." This was reportedly in relation to his accuracy with video games. Jason sent emails to Brittany under his own name but he also sent emails to her from a fictional girlfriend named Suki Renoko; Suki was sometimes spelled Suki and other times Soki. Many of these emails that Jason sent to Brittany had fantastic contents in which he presented himself as fearless, dominant, or aggressive as he wrote about himself through Suki's eyes. Suki was a fictional Japanese female that he made up. He wrote about being daring and

aggressive in activities through Suki's descriptions to Brittany. He also wrote a final email to Brittany stating "Goodbye my love." on the morning of the shooting.

Family History:

Jason's paternal great grandmother suffered with schizophrenia. Jason's two half-sisters on his mother's side have had past difficulties with illicit drug abuse.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse:

Jason McLaughlin denies any use of alcohol or other illicit substances. He reports that he is concerned about hurting his body and he would not take drugs because he would not want to hurt his body.

Legal History:

Jason McLaughlin has no prior criminal or juvenile justice record. He has no prior arrests or charges.

Academic Functioning:

Jason's academic records were reviewed as a part of this evaluation. It appears that his skills scores on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills in the seventh grade ranged from achieving his grade level to scores several grades below his expected level. For example, he achieved eighth grade social studies scores and seventh grade science and vocabulary equivalent skills while his other test scores ranged from the fourth grade through the sixth grade. In particular, his language usage and expression was rated at the fourth grade level on the testing done in the seventh grade. Jason attained average grades through sixth grade, with scores of "satisfactory" and some "outstanding" and "needs improvement" scores. Jason's academic achievement in seventh grade was notable for good behavior and a good attitude but poor performance, especially in reading and in some areas of math and science, for which his grades were mostly D's. During the summer program following his seventh grade year he obtained "not mastered" and finally "partial mastery" in problem solving. By the completion of eighth grade, he failed four classes.

At the Prairie Lakes School, Barb Heinen, the program coordinator, interviewed Jason's teachers to evaluate how he is functioning in that setting. It is clear his functioning is impaired in that Jason has difficulty perceiving concepts and subtle or abstract meanings. He needs to be asked many questions in order to understand subtleties of issues and many times he "just does not get it." There are times when Jason will exhibit an understanding of a concept that is beyond the other kids but for the most part he has trouble with understanding and thinking. He also has trouble with motivation. He shows some exceptional interest in a few specific topics, in particular he shows interest in social studies and in the recent study on the artist Vincent Van Gogh. Jason is observed as taking a longer time to process information. In math, he is eventually able

to understand and remember the concepts obtaining scores of eighty percent, though he is at least one year behind in his math skills.

Jason does not exhibit behavioral problems in school such as aggression, but he stares intensely at the other students and he appears preoccupied with snickering, though he never outright laughs. He appears to have difficulty understanding common humor and will take a long time to understand jokes before he will show emotion and understanding. Jason displays difficulties with motivation, and if he is pushed too fast by the staff he will shut down and not participate. They will let him sit and think about things, they do not push him too hard, because otherwise he will refuse to do the work. Jason physically shuffles and moves slowly and laughs to himself. All of Jason's teachers agree that if he were in a regular school, he would have many difficulties. Jason also draws attention to himself by making known to the other kids "who he is."

On an aptitude test of skills, Jason scored below average in abstract reasoning; he has difficulty seeing relationships among things, objects, patterns, diagrams, or designs. However, he scored an average ability in mechanical reasoning in spatial relationships, indicating that he would have the ability to understand mechanical principles and devices and laws of everyday physics, and in visualizing shapes, sizes, and positions of objects. Jason's five teachers agree that he is at the approximate emotional and cognitive maturity of a 12-year-old. He does not display the normal maturity of a 16-year-old boy.

Medical History and Evaluations to Date:

Jason McLaughlin has no known drug allergies. He was diagnosed with reactive airway disease in childhood that occasionally flares, but he refuses to use an inhaler. He has severe acne on his face, chest and back. His current medications for acne are minocycline and lotions. He is allergic to cats.

Psychiatric Treatment:

Current medications: Abilify 20 mg daily and Lexapro 10 mg daily.

Jason is being treated by Richard Lentz, M.D., an adult psychiatrist, from Park Nicollet Clinic in St. Louis Park, MN. Dr. Lentz began treating Jason McLaughlin in February 2004. Dr. Lentz agreed to treat Jason McLaughlin after a request by Jason's attorney, Daniel Eller, but Dr. Lentz recommended to the family that for any court evaluations, a separate evaluation be obtained by a criminal forensic psychiatrist. In early February 2004, Jason McLaughlin started Zyprexa at 5mg daily; however, he experienced a fainting episode, and his pulse was noted to drop to 48 beats per minute. Due to this episode, Dr. Lentz decreased the Zyprexa to 2.5 mg daily. Dr. Lentz initially diagnosed Jason McLaughlin with "likely emerging schizophrenia." On March 12, 2004, Jason's medications were increased to Zyprexa 7.5 mg daily. During the initial interviews, Jason described to Dr. Lentz hallucinations, which were auditory in nature; he hears the same voice of a single male having discussions with him. Prior to this time, Jason McLaughlin discussed this voice with Nadine Eller-Hollerud, his attorney's paralegal assistant; it was these discussions with Nadine Eller-Hollerud where Jason described many psychotic symptoms thus prompting his attorney to seek medical attention for Jason. Jason described to Dr. Lentz his previous olfactory hallucinations, which were

the smell and taste of metal, prior to and during his initial incarceration. This description was noted by Dr. Careen during Jason's certification evaluation in the fall of 2003.

By April 2004, Jason's medications were changed from Zyprexa to Geodon because the Zyprexa made him too tired. However, the Geodon was associated with shakiness, dizziness, and lightheadedness. Jason's medications were changed to Abilify 10 mg daily. In addition, he was started on the antidepressant Lexapro 10 mg daily. He is continuing on those medications now.

Jason McLaughlin was evaluated by Bryan Bergh, M.D., a child and adolescent psychiatrist. On May 4, 2004, Dr. Bergh rendered a second opinion about Jason McLaughlin's diagnosis. Dr. Bergh diagnosed Jason McLaughlin with schizophrenia, paranoid type, and noted evidence of cognitive as well as hallucinatory experiences of schizophrenia. Jason was noted to experience delusions, hallucinations, and he demonstrated difficulty with some cognitive testing including digit spans backwards, making errors when asked to repeat three digits backwards. In addition, Jason demonstrated a flattened affect, alogia, and avolition which occurred prior to the legal incident. Dr. Bergh rendered the opinion that Jason's overall diagnostic picture clearly supports the ongoing presence of hallucinations and some delusions, although they appear to be diminished by the use of antipsychotic medications. Medical tests accomplished at the Noran Clinic included a head MRI, which was reported by Dr. Lentz as within normal limits, and a routine EEG (electroencephalogram), which was reported as within normal limits by Dr. Lentz.

Psychiatric Symptom History:

Jason McLaughlin began hearing a voice in the sixth grade while walking home late at night from a friend's house. He describes the voice as stating his name in a muffled tone. He initially ignored the voice and he was not sure if he really heard it. He then heard the same voice a few days later while waiting for a school bus early in the morning. He did not ask the other kids if they heard it because he thought something was wrong at that point. He noticed that no one else heard the voice. He believes the next time that he heard the voice or at least one of the earliest times that he heard the voice was while playing with his Doberman Pinscher dog. He noted that his dog did not seem to hear anything and the dog continued to behave normally. The dog was usually very protective, and if something unusual was happening, the dog would have been aware of it. At that point, he knew that either only he heard this voice or the voice was someone the dog trusted, but he was pretty sure that only he was experiencing this voice. He then began to hear this voice ordering him and commanding him to do things such as to build bombs. The voice would tell him to blow up a drug store. At that time, he did not see anyone; he only heard this voice. The voice was in the form of a character, like a video game character. The voice had a name; Dante Lou Casselvara. This name later changed to "Jake."

When asked how he had come up with that name, Jason denied knowing any video character of that name. He denied reading any book with a character of that name. He stated that the voice told him that was his name. Jason did not report hearing the voice to his parents because he did not want his parents to worry about him. He is very concerned about causing his parents stress. He did not want to create problems for his parents, because he was concerned about the stability of their marriage. He was very

concerned with looking strange or weird to his parents and he did not want them to think that he was weird. He describes spending most of his free time by himself, but making up stories to tell his father about social activities during his 3 o'clock telephone conversations with his father after school. He would tell his father he had lunch with certain kids or did certain things when he really did not do those things. He wanted his parents to believe that he was normal though he believed that something was going wrong with himself. Jason has been described as grandiose in his discussion with classmates at Rocori High School. He fabricated success stories about his involvement with paintball tournaments. In the summer of 2003, Jason McLaughlin stayed by himself mostly at home alone. It was during this time that he describes having elaborate interactions with individuals he had met in the woods. Jason reports that in the summer of 2003, his hallucinations intensified and he experienced more sadness and emotional distress. He began to experience the smells as described before, such as smelling aluminum or metal, and he experienced a vibration or pain running from his hand to his foot.

Jason described seeing and interacting with people in the woods near his home. He initially believed that these people were likely real and that everything that went on was real, but over the past year while at Prairie Lakes and since starting antipsychotic medications he has begun to question this experience and to think that maybe these were not real people but instead something that only he was experiencing. He questions his experience of reality because the adults that he has told about this have told him that it could not have really been in "reality." He has difficulty describing real versus unreal because as he stated it, it looks real to him. These people were a gang of young men who were involved in a methamphetamine lab production. The young men were part of a large operation and they were in charge of obtaining production products from drug stores and with making drug deals. He described himself as having the role of helping them by making them maps on his computer. His descriptions of his interaction with this gang is quite detailed and includes the color of their van, description of their clothing and the manner in which they protected him from the drug sales, etc. Jason at times has believed that there is \$100,000 buried in the woods waiting for him to claim for the work that he did for this gang. Jason learned about methamphetamine from his father because his father has been a narcotics officer for as long as Jason can remember. Jason denies ever using or even considering trying methamphetamine. He knows it is very bad for people's brains.

Jason believes that he saw the methamphetamine gang's van at Rocori High School on the day of the shooting. He believes they were coming for him, as he had instructed them to do. He believes he had instructed them to blow his head off after he was arrested. He also describes seeing this same van with the gang of men drive up to the Prairie Lakes Detention Center and wait outside the fence to watch him while he is in the facility.

In December 2003, the character Jake appeared to Jason during a morning gathering at Prairie Lakes Detention Center. He described himself walking into the meeting room and seeing someone whom he thought was a new staff member. He made a comment, "Who is the new person here?" and then realized that nobody else saw this man, so he kept quiet. Now "Jake" talks to him on a daily basis. He describes controlling Jake by taking medications. He feels that taking medications keeps Jake to a tolerable level. For example, he states that he keeps Jake out of any of his family meetings with his parents and if Jake is to ever come in to those family meetings, he will then take

more medications. Jake tells Jason to do things as described in the current functioning section of this report.

Jason has described experiencing tactile hallucinations in which electric shocks run from his hands down through his large toe and throughout his body. He described this to Dr. Carten during the fall of 2003. Most recently in December 2004, Jason has begun to have the visual and olfactory hallucination of seeing dead bodies hanging from the bathroom ceiling. This is quite frightening to him and he will smell the rotting flesh of these bodies. This will make him feel like he is nauseated, gag, and not want to go into the bathroom. He did not report this to the staff of the Prairie Lakes Detention Center. He gives various reasons for not reporting these events. He does not think the staff will believe him. He also thinks that the staff will think he is very weird, but mostly he does not think the staff will believe him if he tells them about this. Jason did not tell his attorney about these symptoms until after his adult certification hearing. At that time, he began to tell Ms. Eller-Hollerud about his hallucinations. He did not tell his attorney because he was concerned that he would be viewed as weird or abnormal.

Jason McLaughlin had been noted to make some odd writings; the contents of those writings were found by his parents after his arrest when they were going through his belongings. Two writings in particular were found and stated as follows: "people are talking to me and telling me to do things and they say if I do them I will be royal [loyal?] to them but so far I didnt [*sic*] do any thing yet but they are saying they can give me anything I want." The next writing had the following quote, "AAA/Aa Bb Cc Dd eE HeLP! I need help! now befor [*sic*] I take my anger out on someone else. I try so hard but nothing seems to go right." When Jason was interviewed by Dr. Gilbertson, he told Dr. Gilbertson that he made these writings sometime in the seventh grade. It is unclear if Jason's memory for when he wrote these statements is accurate.

Jason indicates that he began to experience a great deal of teasing or taunting by his classmates starting in the sixth grade. He reports that Seth Bartell was the primary person who did this teasing. He describes Seth as teasing him about his acne for which Jason felt quite self-conscious. He stated Seth would say, "How's it popping?" and call him names such as pizza-face. He also reports that Seth would poke him and slap him and push him. He estimates that Seth likely pushed him approximately 20 or 30 times from the time he was in sixth grade until his arrest on September 24, 2003. He believes that Seth Bartell was doing the teasing in order to make himself more popular. A review of statements regarding Jason and Seth's interactions indicates that only a few students were aware of any teasing by Seth Bartell towards Jason McLaughlin. The frequency and intensity of the teasing cannot be definitively established based on these reports. Jason did not tell his parents or complain to any teachers about the teasing. He feared being viewed as different by others including his parents if he informed them about the teasing.

Recommendations Regarding Competence to Stand Trial:

It is my medical opinion that Jason McLaughlin will require long-term treatment and serial assessments involving the civil commitment process with likely forced treatment with neuroleptic medications in order to approach becoming competent for trial. At the present time, I think that Jason McLaughlin's symptoms are at least ameliorated

with antipsychotic medication treatment. Unfortunately, his thought disorder appears to have been progressing since an early age and it is unclear if he can ever develop the cognitive executive functioning that is necessary to rationally participate in his defense. In other words he must cognitively develop in addition to having his thought disorder treated because his psychotic illness thwarted his neurologic/cognitive development. If he were older at the time of the onset of his illness, then the goal of treatment would be to restore at least some of his abilities. Unfortunately, his case is much more challenging from a treatment standpoint because of the cognitive developmental process that must occur in early to mid-adolescence in order to develop normal problem solving and executive brain functioning. Jason's illness interferes with this normal development. It is for this reason that Jason's symptoms appear to be so childlike and fantasy-driven.

Jason McLaughlin's description of the events surrounding the shooting on September 24, 2003:

Throughout all of Jason's psychological and psychiatric evaluations over the past 18 months, he remains consistent in his descriptions of his symptoms, and his testing has not indicated any evidence of malingering. He has described unusual and multiple symptoms, some of which appear childlike and fantasy-influenced, but this is likely the result of the early age at which he developed his illness. As described in earlier reports by multiple examiners, Jason McLaughlin became socially isolated prior to the summer of 2003. By his own descriptions, he would make up social interactions with other people to tell his father, in order to keep his father from worrying about whether he had any friends or did any activities. Jason McLaughlin began to hear a voice, which increased in intensity by the summer of 2003. He had visual hallucinations and delusions during that time where he imagined that he was interacting with people in the woods near his home as discussed previously. He heard one male voice that would talk to him and command him to do things. This person, now named "Jake," was experienced by Jason as someone who would tell him what to do and with whom he would struggle about what to do. For example, Jake would tell Jason to make explosive devices and try to blow up a drug store. Jason describes attempting to make explosive devices from shotgun shell parts, but this appears to be fantasy-based, as his father found all of the contents of the shotgun shells from which he supposedly took the gun powder. Jason developed the delusional belief that he was a great sharpshooter or marksman. He did learn how to shoot with his father in the summer of 2003, and he took a gun safety course during that time. He is now and was quite grandiose and delusional about his shooting skills. He named himself sharpestshot290 on his email address, and he made up stories about himself participating in violent acts to a girl named Brittany that he was trying to impress. He even made up a female character to write to Brittany via email about himself.

In September 2003, Jason started the ninth grade at Rocori High School in Cold Spring, Minnesota. Some time during the first few weeks of school, he reports that Seth Bartell teased him and pushed him against a rail or a locker. On Sunday, September 20, 2003, Jason McLaughlin describes having the thought that he needed to stop Seth Bartell from teasing him. He describes this thought as coming into his head after looking at a bruise on the upper left side of his body. He is not sure why he saw this bruise, he may have been changing his shirt, but he believes that this bruise came from when Seth

pushed him. He then thought about, “Seth teasing me all the time.” He stated that Jake told him, “This has to stop.” Jason then decided that he was going to stop Seth Bartell from teasing him. He began to think about how to stop Seth from hurting him after Jake gave him the idea. He thought about possibly fighting him, but he knew that Seth Bartell was much bigger and stronger than he was, and that Seth Bartell would just beat him up if he got into a fight with him. Instead, he decided that he would shoot him in the arm or shoulder and cause a small wound with a small bullet that would not seriously harm Seth. He came up with the idea that he would shoot Seth Bartell in the shoulder and make a scar on the same side of Seth’s body as the side that Jason experienced the bruise (left side). He wanted to leave a scar so that Seth would always remember him. Jason reported to this examiner that now he understands that when you hit someone in their vital organs or in their body that they can die. He thought he would aim and hit Seth in the shoulder and then the bullet would go straight through Seth’s skin to produce a scar that would be with Seth so that Seth would remember Jason. He did not want to harm Seth seriously. Jason grandiosely believed that he had marksman-like accuracy with shooting and never considered that he would miss or that he would cause Seth to die. He then looked for a gun in his father’s drawer to accomplish this. He searched from among several guns and found the smallest gun, but realized there were no bullets for the smallest gun that he believed would cause “the least amount of damage.” So he picked the .22-caliber pistol because the bullets were very small and he believed could not cause much of a wound. He showed an example of the size of the bullets, by pointing to a metal plug for a mechanical pen that was lying on the exam table. This measured 1 cm. in length. He thought that given the small size of these bullets, that he would only wound Seth Bartell and cause a scar. He did not want to harm him seriously. He believed that Seth might suffer a broken bone but that he would live and then Jason could “go on.” Jason decided that he would shoot Seth on Wednesday. He found the bullets, which were separate from the gun, in another area of the house. It is unclear if these bullets were locked up. He left the gun in the drawer until the morning of the shooting so that his father would not know the gun was missing. He denied thinking about the gun safety class that he took the previous summer when he was thinking about this event. He fixated on how he would stop Seth from teasing him by accomplishing the shooting. He looked for security cameras to see if he would be stopped before he shot Seth. On Monday, Jason believes that Seth Bartell teased him. He recalls thinking that Seth Bartell’s “time to hurt him was almost up.” Jason McLaughlin did not think about the risks involved with shooting Seth Bartell and focused on stopping Seth Bartell from teasing him. Jason later reported thinking that he would get into trouble for using a gun on school property and for hurting Seth. He thought that he was likely to be sent to prison, but that since he could go to college in prison, that he could get out and have a future in a few years. There is no evidence in his statement to the police that he thought about going to prison. He also reported believing that he could have himself shot after the event by having the methamphetamine gang come and shoot him in the head. He believes that they showed up late while he was being driven away from the school after the shooting.

On the morning of the event, Wednesday, Jason went to school and during the third period he waited in the gym locker room for Seth Bartell. He went into a bathroom stall, used the toilet, and then put the bullets in the gun and put the gun back into his

Physical Education bag and sat on the locker room bench. When he saw Seth Bartell walking out of the room, instead of coming into the locker room where he intended on shooting him, Jason shot at him. He remembered hearing a noise. Prior to shooting at Seth, he saw a boy named Jade. Jade saw the gun and asked Jason what he was doing and Jason told Jade to shut up. Later, while recounting his story, Jason wishes that Jade had grabbed him or somehow stopped him. He said it would have been a lot better. Jason then shot at Seth again and because Seth kept running as he had started running after the first noise, Jason did not think that he hit him so he chased him up the stairs. Jason then followed Seth Bartell up the stairs and ran past him because he did not see him. All this time Jason was carrying the gun. He then described shooting Seth Bartell from 5 or 6 feet away, but when measuring out 5 or 6 feet and when asked to point out what 5 or 6 feet was, it was apparent that he thought he was 12 feet in front of Seth Bartell. He then shot at Seth Bartell and describes seeing himself at that moment shooting Seth in the shoulder. This is how Jason had pictured it at the time and how he reported it during his statement to the investigator within two hours of the event. He thought that he shot and hit Seth one time in the shoulder. He now knows that he had actually hit Seth Bartell in the side from the back, and with a second shot, he had actually hit Seth Bartell in the head. Jason recalls seeing blood, that Seth Bartell fell, and then Jason turned around and saw Mr. Johnson coming. When Mr. Johnson asked what he was doing, he took the bullets out, put the gun down, and then went into the office with Mr. Johnson. He then describes being transported to the Cold Spring Police Department where he then confessed to having shot Seth Bartell in the left shoulder one time in a statement to BCA Agent Ken McDonald. He stated to Agent McDonald that he had no reason to lie to him. After Jason was told that someone had died as a result of the shooting, he began to weep. After a short break he continued with the interview, explaining his intentions of wanting to hurt Seth Bartell but not wanting to kill him, because Seth Bartell had been teasing him. Jason made the statement that he did not think a .22 gun was going to hurt somebody seriously or “not very much.” After Jason McLaughlin was told about someone having died from the incident, he was asked at the end of the interview if he thought that he did something wrong today; he acknowledged that, stating, “yeah.”

Opinion on Jason McLaughlin’s Mental State at the time of the Offenses:

A thorough review of the case of John Jason McLaughlin indicates that he began to experience symptoms of psychosis likely at least a year prior to the events of September 24, 2003. As a part of his symptom profile as discussed previously, he was self-absorbed and obsessively relived his interactions with Seth Bartell. It is now clear that the “teasing” that Jason describes as occurring at that time and continues to believe occurred even at the present time is a delusional persecutory belief which in combination with his other thought disorder symptoms culminated in his actions on September 24, 2003. Jason McLaughlin experiences stereotypic or concrete thinking observed in individuals with schizophrenia. Despite the fact that Jason McLaughlin previously learned about gun safety and the potential for harming someone with a gun, he was too impaired by his disordered thinking to associate these principles with his intended actions. He suffers from grandiose delusions which directly affected his behavior, believing that he could

skillfully cause a minor injury that would then stop Seth Bartell from teasing him. This concrete thinking with regard to his ability of being able to shoot through Seth's arm or shoulder, like in a cartoon or a movie, indicates a very distorted and childlike concrete interpretation of his actions. Immediately after the shooting, Jason reported that this is what he did. He gave no indication that he envisioned his actions in any other way. He actually perceived his actions as having accomplished the deed that he set out to do, which was to shoot Seth Bartell in the shoulder. At the time of his actions and as a direct result of his mental illness, Jason McLaughlin suffered a defect of reasoning and a serious distortion of reality so that he did not know the nature of his act. It is my opinion that because Jason experienced a severe distortion of reality seeing himself shooting Seth Bartell in the arm that he did not know the nature of his act at the time that he committed the act, and it is my opinion that at the time of this act he did not know and he did not appreciate the wrongfulness of his act constituting the offense with which he is charged.

There is no doubt that Jason was intended in his actions in order to accomplish them. That is, he chose and hid the gun, he planned the event, and he examined the area where he intended to shoot Seth. Individuals suffering severe mental illness can plan and make intentional actions that are based on delusional thinking. Persons with mental illness can experience such severe distortions of reality as to not know the real nature of their actions. Jason concretely and delusionally believed that "he must stop Seth." In a general sense, he knows that killing is wrong, so he intended his actions to simply hurt him, and this is where his disordered thinking caused him to not know the nature or wrongfulness of his actions. His cognitive impairments as a result of his schizophrenia interfered with his ability to consider that he might seriously harm Seth Bartell or harm someone else. This was not simply a boy who was negligently ignoring the risks. He didn't even think of the risks as a result of his thought disorder. It was like he was thinking at the level of a young child who believes that he could shoot someone in an extremity with a small gun and cause no serious harm, like in a movie or as part of a video game. At that time, Jason McLaughlin believed that this was the only way to stop Seth Bartell. He later described to other examiners that he considered he could go to prison for bringing a gun to school and assaulting someone with it. There is no indication in his police statement that he was thinking about legal or criminal penalties for his behaviors at the time or immediately following the shooting. Though there is an email in which Jason says "goodbye" to Brittany, it is unclear if this is due to his delusional belief that he will have the methamphetamine gang shoot him in the head as he is taken out of the school. That is, he will die a martyr and Seth will always remember him by the scar he will have left on Seth's shoulder. Though he later discussed prison with other examiners, there is no evidence in his police statement that he was thinking he did a crime that would require a penalty. Instead, he matter-of-factly informed the BCA officer of his actions that he did to "hurt" Seth, to stop Seth from teasing him. Immediately after Jason McLaughlin shot Seth Bartell he told the police what he considered to be a forthright and truthful statement; that he simply shot him in the shoulder to get him to stop teasing him. He gave no indication that he knew his actions were otherwise. He perceived his actions as having accomplished the deed that he set out to do, which was to shoot Seth Bartell in the shoulder. He was experiencing

a severe distortion of reality at the time of the shooting and he did not think anything more of his actions, thus displaying his idiosyncratic concrete thinking.

It is my opinion that Jason McLaughlin did not know the nature of the act constituting the offense for which he is charged, and thus he did not appreciate and he did not know the wrongfulness of his actions on September 24, 2003. Thus in my opinion Jason McLaughlin qualifies for Minnesota's insanity defense according to Criminal Statute Rule 20.02. His mental illness is serious and he clearly evidenced dangerous behaviors to also qualify him as a mentally ill and dangerous person.

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