



JUDICIARY OF
ENGLAND AND WALES

THE HON MR JUSTICE HOLROYDE
A PRESIDING JUDGE OF THE NORTHERN CIRCUIT

IN THE CROWN COURT AT LIVERPOOL
T2012 7424, 7425

THE QUEEN
-v-
ADAM NEIL LEWIS

SENTENCING REMARKS

Tuesday 20th November, 2012

Adam Lewis, you have pleaded guilty to the murder of Hannah Windsor, and to two offences of assaulting her by penetration. You have also pleaded guilty to offences of burglary, and arson being reckless as to whether life was endangered. I have to sentence you for those offences. I also have to explain to you the reasons for my sentence. I will try to do that as simply as I can, so that you can understand it. You have an intermediary sitting beside you to help you to understand.

Before I say anything about what you did, I need to say something about you. Your barrister, Mr Riordan QC, has helped me by making a number of important points on your behalf. In addition I have read expert reports from two consultant psychiatrists, Dr Noir Thomas and Dr Simon Halstead, and from a consultant forensic psychologist Dr Ailis Murphy. Because I have all that information about you, Mr Riordan did not ask me to order a pre-sentence report.

As Mr Riordan said, you are a very troubled young man. As a child you suffered parental neglect and physical abuse. Your development was delayed by learning difficulties. You have a very low IQ, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and a conduct disorder. When you were about 9 you went to live with your grandparents, who clearly did all they could for you and who are to be commended both for that and for their very responsible behaviour when they learned that you had admitted killing Hannah Windsor. Your behaviour was impulsive, you set fires, you self-harmed and you were disruptive at school. You were made the subject of a statement of special educational needs and transferred at the age of 11 to the special school where you later met Hannah Windsor. She had problems of her own. You have been a heavy drinker of alcohol from a very early age, and have also abused cannabis. It is clear from the reports that you have only a limited ability to think things through in order to control your actions. In Dr Thomas' opinion, you have a mild learning difficulty and a personality disorder. You do not care for the feelings of others.

You have a number of previous convictions. None of your previous offences seems to have been particularly serious in itself, but you have twice previously burgled someone's home.

Next I am going to summarise what you did. On Saturday 12th May this year you burgled the home of the ex-boyfriend of your sister and stole various items. You also lit two fires in the house, destroying some furniture and causing smoke damage to other items. Then, to use your own words, you went on your toes and spent a number of nights camping out on Bidston Hill. You took with you a Swiss Army type of knife. I accept that you were not carrying that knife as a weapon, but you later used it to mutilate and stab Hannah Windsor.

Hannah Windsor was only 17 years old at the time. She had been your girlfriend off and on for some time. You told her what you had done. On Monday 14th May she made a statement about that to the police.

She visited you at your campsite on Wednesday 16th May. She had been advised by the police not to do so, but she must have thought she would be safe with you. She had with her a note she had been given by the police, telling her which number to ring if she needed to contact them again. That note, torn into pieces, was later found near where you murdered Hannah, and I am sure you must have seen it.

On the Thursday, 17th May, you spoke to a man who was walking on Bidston Hill and asked him what you would get for murder. It seems clear that by that time you had sexually assaulted and murdered Hannah Windsor, although her body was not found until the Saturday, 19th May.

Only you know exactly what you did to Hannah, and in what order you did it. It is however clear that you deliberately inflicted cruel injuries upon her which must have caused her immense pain and suffering. The evidence of the very experienced pathologist, Dr Alison Armour, makes chilling reading. You tied Hannah Windsor to a tree, using straps around her wrists. You covered her mouth with sticky tape. You forcefully penetrated her vagina and her anus, causing bruising and tearing, either with your penis or with some object shaped like a penis. You bruised and tore her urethra, the part of the body from which she would urinate. That is an unusual injury, which you probably did that by inserting something into it rather than as part of forcible penetration of the vagina. You cut into the outer lips of her vagina, another unusual injury which you must have done deliberately. Most if not all of those agonising injuries to her private parts must have been caused whilst she was alive.

You repeatedly dragged your knife across her body, leaving long cuts and scratches. Several of those cuts and scratches were on or near her breasts. You stabbed her body and her legs a number of times. You stabbed her through the inside part of the left upper thigh: that injury damaged the femoral artery and caused internal bleeding. Again, many of those very painful wounds were caused whilst Hannah was alive. You also inflicted a quite dreadful wound lower down her left thigh. The photographs show that you gouged deeply into the thigh and then dragged the point of the knife down to her knee. In addition, you strangled her using a length of nylon cord which was found nearby, and you may also have throttled her with your hands.

In Dr Armour's opinion, Hannah's death was caused by multiple injuries: asphyxia by a combination of the surgical tape which you wrapped around her mouth and strangulation, together with blood loss from the wound in the upper inner thigh. Dr Armour is able to say that many of the injuries which I have summarised must have been caused whilst Hannah was alive. Some, including the gouging of the left thigh, may have occurred around the time of death.

Adam Lewis, that was a prolonged, merciless and terrible attack, which must have been agonisingly painful for Hannah Windsor before she died. You have not given any explanation for why you did it. You say she had hit you, but even if she had that does not begin to explain why you made her suffer as you did. It may be that you learned that she had told the police where you were, and you wanted to get back at her for that. Clearly you had a sexual motive in cutting her breasts and her vagina, and in penetrating and injuring her private parts in the way I have mentioned. But in addition, what you did to Hannah must have taken quite a long time, and you must have used quite a lot of force. You must have known what dreadful pain you were causing her. Her hands were tied and she cannot have been in any position to resist. You did it in cold blood. So I am sure that you also acted out of deliberate cruelty, and that the prosecution are right when they describe this as a case of torture. I am also sure that you intended to kill Hannah, not just to cause her really serious injury. I have taken into account the points Mr Riordan has made about that, but the nature and extent of your violence to Hannah Windsor whilst she was alive, including in particular the force which you must have used to strangle her, make me sure that when you caused the fatal injuries you must have intended to kill her.

To make matters even worse, after you had murdered Hannah you hid her body by moving it to a place in the bushes which was difficult to reach and by covering it with soil and branches.

On the other hand, you quickly admitted responsibility for the killing. You also showed the police where you had buried the body. Those are important points in your favour. If you had not helped the police in that way, it seems to me that it could well have been a considerable time before Hannah's body was found.

In every crime of murder, one life is taken but many other lives are damaged. I have read and taken account of statements by both of Hannah's parents. They, and other members of Hannah's family and friends, have suffered and will continue to suffer as a result of what you did.

The sentence for murder is fixed by law. I must impose a life sentence, which because of your age is a sentence of custody for life. I must also set the minimum term: in other words, the length of time which you must stay in prison before you can even be considered for release. Before I decide that minimum term, it is important to emphasise the two features of a life sentence which protect the public whatever the length of the minimum term. The first is that you will not automatically be released once you have completed your minimum term: a decision will have to be made at that stage as to whether it is yet safe to allow your release. The second is that even when you are released on licence, your life sentence will not then come to an end. You will have to obey the conditions of your licence for the rest of his life. If at any time you reoffend, the Secretary of State has the power to recall you to prison to continue serving your life sentence for as long as may be necessary.

The law says that I have to set the minimum term which I consider appropriate taking into account amongst other things the seriousness of the offence of murder and the other offences which you have admitted. Your lawyers will understand that I have had regard to the law set out in Schedule 21 to the Criminal Justice Act 2003, in particular paragraphs 5(2)(e), 10(g), 11(c) and 11(g). Again, I will try to explain the most important points to you as simply as I can.

You were born on 25th February 1994, and so you were aged about 18 years 12 weeks when you committed the murder. I am quite sure that your murder of Hannah

Windsor involved both a sexual and a sadistic element. The law says that in those circumstances the starting point is a minimum term of 30 years. However, if you had been under 18 when you committed the murder, the starting point would only have been 12 years. So I have to take into account the fact that you were only just 18, and I have to take into account your mental difficulties because they make you less mature and less capable than other 18 year olds. You are an adult in the eyes of the law, but you clearly have your limitations, and you do not have the same level of understanding as most adults. That combination of your young age and your mental limitations makes it necessary for me to reduce significantly the minimum term which I would otherwise set in this extremely serious case. However, it is important to note that the psychiatrists do not say that your mental disorder provides an explanation for what you did, or substantially reduces your mental responsibility for the murder. They do not say that it was your mental disorder which drove you to torture and murder Hannah Windsor. It is also important to note that the murder of Hannah Windsor was not an impulsive act or an unthinking act. You knew what you were doing, and you did it deliberately. So there is a limit to how much your mental difficulties can reduce your sentence.

There is one other important point in your favour which also helps to reduce the minimum term. You pleaded guilty to all the offences. You pleaded guilty to the arson at an early stage, and you are entitled to full credit for that plea. You also pleaded guilty to the burglary at an early stage, but the law imposes a minimum sentence for that offence and restricts the extent to which I can reduce the sentence because of your guilty plea. You pleaded guilty to the murder and the sexual offences on the day of trial, and you can only have limited credit for those late pleas. But I will give you as much credit as I properly can, because it took courage to plead guilty, and the fact that you did so meant that Hannah's family did not have to sit through a trial wondering what the outcome would be. I can tell you that your guilty plea to murder has made it possible to reduce your minimum term by 2 years.

For the offence of murder, the sentence is one of custody for life. I direct that the minimum term which must expire before you can be considered for release on licence is one of 22 years, less the days which you have spent on remand in custody, all of which will count towards your sentence. For the other offences there will be concurrent sentences of detention in a Young Offender Institution as follows: for burglary, 2 years 6 months; for arson, 3 years 4 months; for each of the offences of assault by penetration, 5 years 6 months. Because you have been convicted of those sexual offences you will be subject for the rest of your life to the notification requirements of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, which your lawyers will explain to you.

I understand that you have spent 181 days in custody. If that figure turns out to be wrong, it can be corrected administratively. The end result is that you have a life sentence, and you must stay in prison for at least the next 21 years 184 days.

The Hon. Mr Justice Holroyde