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THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
In The Court of Appeals

APPEAL FROM CHARLESTON COUNTY
Court of General Sessions

Roger M. Young, Sr., Circuit Court Judge

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JAN 14 2015

SC Court of Appeals

Case No.: 2011-GS-10-05232
Case No.: 2011-GS-19-04844
Appellate Case No.: 2013-000376

The State of South Carolina.....Respondent,

v.

Robert Harvey Payne Appellant.

FINAL REPLY BRIEF OF APPELLANT

Ginger D. Goforth
LAZENBY LAW FIRM, LLC
PO Box 6099
Spartanburg, SC 29304
(864) 804-5050

Robert M. Dudek
Chief Appellate Defender
SC Commission on Indigent Defense
Appellate Division
PO Box 11589
Columbia, SC 29201-1589
(803) 734-1330
ATTORNEYS FOR APPELLANT

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REPLY ARGUMENT

I. Evidence did not exist to meet each element of the charge of Indecent Exposure because Payne's behavior was constitutionally protected expressive speech.

South Carolina law makes it a crime to "willfully, maliciously, and indecently expose" oneself in a public place, on the property of others, or to the view of any person on a street or highway. S.C. Code Ann. § 16-15-130(A)(1).

Payne's conduct did not meet the elements of this crime because there is no evidence of that his actions were malicious. The State and the trial court were in agreement that Payne's behavior was not intended – or received – in any sexual way, nor did it have any kind of sexual or prurient connotation. It was not intended to gratify or arouse. (R. p. 383). Therefore, the State bore the burden of proving Payne acted solely out of malice, in violation of the statute. The evidence does not support this position.

Payne testified that on May 29, 2011, the toilet on his houseboat was not functional. He also testified that he suffers from prostate cancer, which causes him to have to urinate frequently. While he most often used gallon jugs and/or a bucket to collect waste, he would sometimes be caught short. He further testified that he did not believe that the general public could see him from the vantage point of his boat, and that he did take care to be sure the general public did not see him, and that if anyone did, it would be Stone. (R. pp. 319, 338, 349, 363-364).

Moreover, any behavior exhibited toward Stone qualified as constitutionally protected expressive behavior, and therefore was not subject to punishment.

Payne's behavior is expressive speech, not punishable by the Indecent Exposure statute. The South Carolina and United States Constitutions expressly protect freedom of speech, and no law – including a law governing indecent exposure – shall abridge such freedom.

Expressive conduct is protected by the First Amendment. United States v. O'Brien, 391 U.S. 367, 376 (1968). Such symbolic conduct is protected even if the idea being communicated by the conduct is offensive to society. State v. Ramsey, 311 S.C. 555, 559, 430 S.E.2d 511, 514 (1993), citing Texas v. Johnson, 491 U.S. 397, 414 (1989). Public nudity, without more, is not a violation of the Indecent Exposure statute. See, e.g., Diamonds v. Greenville County, 325 S.C. 154, 480 S.E.2d 718, 719-20 (1997). When public nudity is employed as expressive speech to convey a particularized message, it is protected from punishment by law.

Payne's action was a statement of disdain and/or disrespect that was intended as expressive behavior, and was understood that way. Payne testified in great detail concerning the expressive message of his conduct – that of political contempt. For two years, he had been subjected to a deliberate pattern of "harassing and stalking and the cops coming down." He felt that Stone had manipulated his relationship with law enforcement to harass him and force him to move. He was expressing his "contempt and frustration" as a result of this treatment. He testified that was sending "a clear message." Stone was included in the direction of this expression, even if he may not have been the only target of the expression. Stone was included because he had connections with the law enforcement and public officials whose harassment Payne endured, and he used those

connections to help move Payne from the place that he believed he had a legal right to live. Specifically, he took issue with the city ordinance governing abandoned boats, which was attempting to be enforced against him, even though he lived on his boat. He further testified that Stone's constant complaints cause him to be the unfounded target of investigations and/or inquiries by the Army Corps of Engineers, OCR, DNA, DNR, DHEC, Charleston County, and the Town of Mount Pleasant. (R. pp. 320-323, 333, 350, 353).

The record reflects that Payne intended to convey a message of political contempt, and that the message was in part directed as Stone because of his misuse and corruption of law enforcement procedures and agencies. Stone received the message. The State did not prove that anyone else received the message. The trial court therefore erred as a matter of law in failing to direct a verdict that Payne's expression was constitutionally protected.

II. The trial court erred in failing to direct a verdict of not guilty on the charge of Pointing and Presenting a Firearm because the evidence is insufficient to support a verdict.

Respondent argues that the trial court did not err by failing to direct a verdict of not guilty on the charge of pointing and presenting a firearm "where two different victims testified that defendant pointed a shotgun at them and defendant fired it."

This same testimony forms the basis of Payne's argument that the trial court was required to direct a verdict. The record reflects that the two witnesses are referring to the same single shot fired by Payne. This is the sole basis for the Pointing and Presenting charge. The witnesses, however, describe the shot as coming from a different direction,

and happening at a different time. It was not reasonable for the jury to believe this evidence, which defies the laws of physics and cannot form the basis of Payne's guilt. Further, the jurors were allowed, essentially, to substitute their subjective opinion of whether Payne's behavior could have caused bodily harm.

S.C. Code Ann. § 16-23-410 provides that it is unlawful for a person to present or point at another person a loaded or unloaded firearm. The State was required to prove each element of this crime. "Presentment" means "to show in a threatening manner." In re: Spencer R., 387 S.C. 517, 692 S.E.2d 569, 572-73 (Ct. App. 2010). The State must also prove that Payne specifically intended to present a firearm. Id. at 573. Last, the State must show that a weapon be pointed or presented "at" someone. Spencer, 692 S.E.2d at 573.

The State did not offer evidence sufficient to support a verdict that Payne pointed or presented a firearm at a person, and that Payne intended to do so. The record shows that Payne not only did not intend to point or present a firearm, he took great pains to hide what he was doing. Further, Payne testified, and the State did not contradict, that he cannot even discern whether people are present at a distance of 170 yards. (R. p. 332). There is no way, based on the evidence of record, that the State established intent on Payne's part to point or present a firearm at either Stone or Anderson.

Stone testified that he heard a boom that he thought was a backfire. This was the shot that Payne fired from inside his boat. (R. p. 78). Stone testified that he then observed what he believed to be "a stick or maybe a baseball bat" in Payne's hands when he was leaving his boat. (R. p. 66). According to Stone, Payne fired the second shot

from the island within one minute of the first shot. (R. p. 78). In the 911 call that followed, Stone did not mention anything about Payne aiming or firing in his direction or at his person, even though this became his narrative at trial. (R. p. 71).

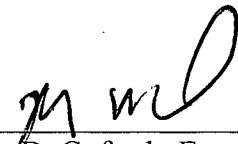
Anderson also could not perceive any danger from Payne's presence on the island. He testified that he had to pick up a firearm scope in order to determine what Payne might have been holding while emerging from the woods 270 yards away. Like Stone, Anderson's 911 call did not mention in any way that Payne had fired at him. (R. pp. 169-171).

In short, no reasonable juror could find evidence of pointing and presenting "at" anyone because the gun was between 179 yards and 270 yards from Stone and Anderson, respectively. Appellant thus submits that the State did not meet its burden of proving that Payne presented a firearm at either Stone or Anderson.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons set forth herein, this Court should reverse the convictions of Robert Harvey Payne and direct that a judgment of not guilty be entered in this matter on the charges of Indecent Exposure and Pointing and Presenting a Firearm.

January 14, 2015

By: 
Ginger D. Goforth, Esq.
LAZENBY LAW FIRM, LLC
P.O. Box 6099
Spartanburg, SC 29304
Phone: (864) 804-5050
Fax: (864) 804-5051

Robert M. Dudek
Chief Appellate Defender
SC Commission on Indigent Defense
Appellate Division
1330 Lady Street, Suite 401
PO Box 11589
Columbia, SC 29201-1589
(803) 734-1330

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CERTIFICATE OF COUNSEL

The undersigned hereby certifies that the Final Reply Brief complies with Rule 211(b), SCACR.

By: 

Ginger D. Goforth
LAZENBY LAW FIRM, LLC
PO Box 6099
Spartanburg, SC 29304
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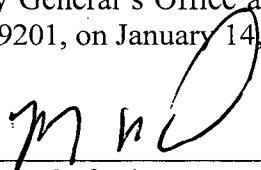
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PROOF OF SERVICE

I, the undersigned, hereby certify the Final Reply Brief of Appellant in the above referenced matter was mailed, postage prepaid, to Respondent's Attorney, T. Parkin C. Hunter, Assistant Attorney General, by sending to the SC Attorney General's Office at Rembert Dennis Building, 1000 Assembly Street, Room 519, Columbia, SC 29201, on January 14, 2015.

By: 
Ginger D. Goforth
LAZENBY LAW FIRM, LLC
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