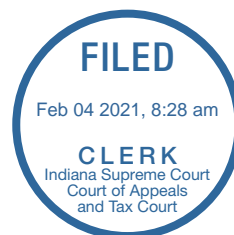


MEMORANDUM DECISION

Pursuant to Ind. Appellate Rule 65(D), this Memorandum Decision shall not be regarded as precedent or cited before any court except for the purpose of establishing the defense of res judicata, collateral estoppel, or the law of the case.



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IN THE COURT OF APPEALS OF INDIANA

Stephanie Bryant,
Appellant-Defendant,

v.

State of Indiana,
Appellee-Plaintiff.

February 4, 2021

Court of Appeals Case No.
20A-CR-481

Appeal from the Johnson Circuit
Court

The Honorable Andrew S.
Roesener, Judge

Trial Court Cause No.
41C01-0612-MR-1

Altice, Judge.

Case Summary

- [1] A jury found Stephanie Bryant guilty but mentally ill of murder. The trial court entered judgment of conviction and sentenced Bryant to fifty-five years executed. On appeal, Bryant argues that the jury erred in rejecting her insanity defense.
- [2] We affirm.

Facts & Procedural History

- [3] Stella and Arthur Morgan adopted Bryant when she was six or seven years old after both of Bryant's parents died from health conditions. Stella was the sister of Bryant's father and therefore Bryant's biological aunt. Stella kept an orderly and immaculate home where "[e]verything had a place." *Transcript Vol. 3* at 188. In raising Bryant, Stella was very strict. Stella and Bryant both had tempers and would get into some "pretty hefty arguments." *Id.* at 184. Even after Bryant became an adult, Stella remained strict with her and treated her "like a child." *Id.*
- [4] The Morgans' other adopted daughter, Frances, was in her late twenties and married with two children of her own when Bryant was adopted. Frances's daughter, Julie, is two years younger than Bryant and often spent time with Bryant at the Morgans' home, at school, and on holidays. Julie was one of Bryant's only friends, and she would stand up for Bryant when others picked on her. When Bryant was in her late teens/early twenties, Julie started noticing some intermittent behavioral and emotional changes with Bryant.

- [5] Bryant moved out of Stella’s home and into an apartment around the age of twenty “when she got her first inheritance.” *Id.* at 181. Bryant soon married but divorced a few years later. Bryant was employed at an egg hatchery for a day and at a department store for a year before she inherited a 200-acre farm in Benton County in 1994. Bryant never again held gainful employment but was able to support herself with her inheritance and proceeds from the family farm.
- [6] Bryant lived on her own at the farm for a short time, furnishing the farmhouse, buying a horse, and adopting a dog. Family members started to observe unusual behaviors from Bryant, who was then in her late twenties or early thirties. Bryant told Stella she saw writing on one of the buildings on the farm and numbers on a wall in the farmhouse. On one occasion Stella and Frances went to check on Bryant and found Bryant and her dog in a state of starvation. Bryant was taken to the hospital by ambulance and then transferred to a mental health facility. After a couple of days, Bryant signed herself out of the facility and returned to the farmhouse. Thereafter, Bryant set two different fires at the farmhouse, with the second burning the house to the ground.
- [7] In 1996, Bryant sold the farm for approximately \$450,000. She then alternated between staying with Stella, staying in nice hotels, and disappearing for extended periods of time. On one occasion, while staying with Stella, Stella told Bryant that she needed to prepare Bryant’s own taxes. Bryant responded by going upstairs, locking her dog up, and then setting Stella’s bedroom closet on fire. Bryant promptly left the house, telling Stella only that she was going to K-Mart. No one saw or heard from Bryant for the next two to three years,

during which time she was hospitalized in a mental health facility in Washington D.C. for about a year. When discharged, Bryant flew back to Indianapolis and met with Stella and Frances. According to Frances, Bryant was medicated and exhibited normal behavior until, against Stella's wishes, Bryant stopped taking her medication.

[8] After Bryant stopped taking her medication, she did not act paranoid, but seemed disorganized. Stella believed Bryant had behavioral problems, not mental health issues, and would not seek professional help for Bryant because Stella believed it was a private family matter. Stella often treated Bryant like a child and corrected her behavior, and Bryant usually responded. Bryant was a chain smoker and Stella did not permit her to smoke in the house. Bryant abided by Stella's rule and smoked on the back porch. Bryant also had to be home before Stella went to bed at night or risk being locked out as Stella was the only person who had a key to the house and always locked things up.

[9] Along with her mental health, Bryant's personal hygiene also declined as she started to infrequently bathe or change her clothes. Julie described Bryant's appearance as like a "typical homeless person" with "tattered," dirty, and disheveled clothes, matted hair, dirty hands, and long fingernails. *Id.* at 182. This was in stark contrast to Bryant's appearance years before when she wore expensive clothes and makeup. Stella was unable to convince Bryant to tend to her hygiene or obtain employment.

[10] In addition to the decline in personal hygiene, Bryant started exhibiting more unusual behaviors. She would mumble to herself, pull out her own hair, talk to someone who was not there, and inappropriately laugh or loudly cackle. When she would stay at Stella's, Bryant would sleep under the dining room table, using a black suitcase she always kept with her as a pillow, and sit on the floor to eat her meals. On one occasion, Bryant left a paper bag that contained \$29,000 cash in a taxi on her ride home from Indianapolis. The police eventually returned the money to Stella. From that money, Stella would give Bryant cash in \$2000 increments. Bryant was unaware that this was her money from the sale of the farm and believed that Stella was providing her own money. In a different incident, Bryant went to Stella's to get money and when she arrived, Bryant was in wet clothes, explaining to Stella that she had taken a shower with her clothes on. Despite her unusual behaviors, Bryant was still able to hold a conversation and at times act appropriately.

[11] Stella's neighbor, Benjamin Miller, would often see Bryant smoking on Stella's back porch. In the evenings Miller went out back to smoke every hour or so from the time he got off work until about 1:00 a.m. He would see Bryant talking to herself, and she would curse and yell at him and try to intimidate him. From inside his house, he could often hear Bryant screaming and yelling either from Stella's back yard or as she was walking down the street. In September 2006, Miller saw Bryant leaning over his fence and pointing and yelling at his grass for laughing at her.

[12] Bryant's money from the sale of the farm ran out in the summer of 2006. In the months that followed, Bryant spent her days panhandling in downtown Indianapolis, returning by city bus to Stella's each night. Bryant was then forty-five years old, and Stella was eighty-three years old.

[13] On December 21, 2006, Frances visited Stella at her home. Bryant was there, pacing around the house with her arms crossed, which Bryant was known to do when she was angry. When Frances asked Stella what was going on, Stella replied that Bryant was upset because she had told Bryant that she needed to find a new place to live after the new year. Stella had also told Bryant that she was not going to give her any more money. Frances described Bryant's appearance that day as typical for Bryant, i.e, black clothes, unkept hair, dirty and long fingernails, and stained hands. As Stella walked Frances to the door, Bryant hovered at Stella's back, which was unusual. Stella even told Bryant to "get off." *Id.* at 148. Frances told Stella that she would see her on Christmas Day, as Stella had declined Frances's invitation to join her and her family on Christmas Eve so she could be home with Bryant.

[14] On December 22 and 23, 2006, Bryant's routine remained the same. She woke in the morning, hollered goodbye to Stella, took the city bus to Indianapolis, panhandled near the CVS Pharmacy on Ohio Street, and then took the bus back home to Stella's in the late afternoon. About 8:00 p.m. on December 23, Stella's friend left a message on Stella's answering machine. Around 10:30 p.m. on December 23, Miller saw Bryant on Stella's back porch and observed her "[s]moking and yelling, cussing, talking to herself." *Id.* at 215. Miller had a

clear view due to a streetlight in his own back yard and he could see Bryant from “about mid-waist up.” *Id.* On the morning of December 24, 2006, Stella’s friend reported to Frances that Stella was not in front of her house to be picked up for church. At some point that day, Julie’s husband called the police and requested a welfare check on Stella.

[15] Officers Richard Kelly and John Myers of the Greenwood Police Department (GPD) received the dispatch and arrived at Stella’s home around 7:15 p.m. on Christmas Eve. The officers observed a large pool of blood on the back patio and drag marks on the ground that led from the house to the shed. The door to the shed was secured with a padlock. The officers also located a woman’s shoe and blood splatter on the east side of the house. Officer Kelly used a ladder to peer into the shed from the top of the doors and observed a human body on the ground. With assistance from the fire department, the padlock to the shed was cut and the brick holding the door shut was moved aside to reveal Stella’s dead body, unclothed except for her underwear. Stella’s blood-stained pink shirt and sweatpants were found near her in the shed. Officer Kelly noted a “significant” wound to Stella’s forehead. *Transcript Vol. 2* at 124. Police secured the scene and determined that all exterior doors to the house were locked and there were no signs of forced entry.

[16] Stella’s family arrived shortly thereafter and immediately alerted the police to Bryant and indicated that she might be at the Greyhound Bus Station in downtown Indianapolis. Around 1:15 a.m. on December 25, 2006, GPD Officer Doug Roller approached Bryant, who was sitting on a wooden bench at

the bus station. He noted that Bryant had clean hair and clean hands with short fingernails, but her pants were covered in blood. Officer Roller read Bryant her *Miranda* rights, and she nodded indicating her understanding thereof. Bryant was “subdued,” but appeared to be coherent and cooperative; she was not mumbling, yelling, or screaming. *Id.* at 161. Officer Roller asked Bryant when she had last seen Stella, and Bryant stated that she last saw her mother “a couple of days ago.” *Id.* at 157. When asked about the substance on her pants, Bryant claimed it was something that she picked up on the streets of Indianapolis. After Officer Roller made eye contact with Bryant and told her that she could provide a better answer, Bryant broke eye contact, looked away, and began to mumble.

[17] Bryant was transported to the Greenwood Police Station where she was interviewed by Detective Patti Cummings and two other officers during the early morning hours of Christmas Day. Bryant was again advised of her *Miranda* rights, and she agreed to speak with them. Bryant stated that she had last seen Stella two to three days prior and that the substance on her pants was from the streets. She indicated that Stella was wearing pink pajamas or a gown the last time she saw her and that Stella was probably in bed when she left to go downtown. She also stated that the last time she was at Stella’s, she took a sponge bath in the sink before taking the bus to Indianapolis.

[18] Upon further questioning, however, Bryant claimed to have spent the previous four to five nights in Indianapolis and that specifically, she spent the previous night at the bus station. She also stated that she tried to call Stella from the bus

station, but Stella did not answer. When it was suggested that Stella may have upset her, Bryant told Detective Cummings that she did not do anything and that she was not mad at Stella, and then she asked to call Stella. After the interviewing officers made it clear that something had happened to Stella, Bryant responded, “sounds like she’s in the morgue, isn’t she?” *Transcript Vol. 3* at 42. Although pausing several times and laughing intermittently during the interview, Bryant seemed to know where she was and what she was doing, and her answers were logical.

[19] Two days later, upon Bryant’s request, Detective Cummings went to the jail to speak with her. While continuing to look at the floor, Bryant asked Detective Cummings if she could go to Stella’s funeral. After Detective Cummings told her she had no control over that, Bryant told her to “find out who killed my mom.” *Transcript Vol. 2* at 241.

[20] Based on the physical evidence at the scene, police believe that sometime on the night of December 23 or the early morning of December 24, Bryant struck Stella on the head with a hammer near the desk in the dining room, leaving a large pool of blood on the carpet and blood splatter on the wall. Blood smears throughout the house indicate that Stella was able to move through the living room and kitchen toward the back door. Stella went out the back door and around the east side of the house where it is believed that Bryant caught up with her and struck her again with the hammer leaving another large pool of blood and blood splatter on the side of the house. From there, Bryant dragged Stella to the shed in the backyard, stopping at the back patio where a large pool of

blood was located. Bryant unlocked the padlock on the shed door, the key to which Stella always kept on a hook by the back door. She then dragged Stella into the shed and locked her in. An autopsy revealed that in addition to the massive blunt force injury to her forehead, Stella suffered fourteen other blows to her head that were consistent with the use of a hammer. The cause of Stella's death was multiple blunt force injuries with multiple skull fractures. Samples taken from Bryant's pants, shoes, sweatshirt, and coat tested positive for Stella's blood.

[21] During the search of Stella's home, three things were found out of place—a cigarette butt was found on a kitchen rug; the shed key was not on the hook inside the back door but rather was found on a shelf in the pantry; and the hammer used to kill Stella¹ was in an unusual location at the back of a utensil drawer. Additionally, the mattress in Stella's upstairs bedroom was off the bed frame, but there was no blood found upstairs. No money was found in Stella's purse, although the family knew her to always keep a small amount of cash. Messages taken from Stella's answering machine evidenced that, unlike any other day, Bryant called Stella multiple times throughout the day on December 24. According to Julie, the family noted that the bureau appeared to have been rifled through and there was a note in Stella's handwriting laying out in the open that had the names and numbers of two mental health facilities – Wishard Hospital and Community Hospital North. Stella's life insurance policy and will

¹ Blood and hair on the hammer tested positive for Stella's DNA.

were found outside of the bureau, both of which provided for equal division between Bryant and Frances.

[22] On December 29, 2006, the State charged Bryant with murder. On March 20, 2007, the trial court, based on an evaluation by forensic psychiatrist Dr. George Parker, found Bryant incompetent to stand trial. She was subsequently admitted to Larue Carter Memorial Hospital for competency restoration services. Medical records from Larue Carter show that for the first couple of years, Bryant was uncooperative and denied having auditory or visual hallucinations. During the eleven years Bryant spent at Larue Carter, she was treated with antipsychotic medications.

[23] In October 2018, the trial court was notified that Bryant had regained competency. Bryant filed a notice of intent to offer a defense of insanity on November 6, 2018. On August 13, 2019, the trial court ordered Bryant to submit to two sanity evaluations. Dr. Parker and Dr. Don Olive evaluated Bryant and filed their respective reports with the court in October 2019. Both doctors independently found that Bryant suffered from schizophrenia but that she appreciated the wrongfulness of her conduct at the time of Stella's murder.

[24] A four-day jury trial commenced on January 28, 2020. Bryant's primary defense was that she was insane at the time of the crime. Bryant, however, also testified in her own defense and denied killing Stella. She admitted that she was at Stella's house on the nights leading up to December 24, 2006, including December 23. She also recalled Stella telling her that she would have to make

other living arrangements after Christmas and that Stella was not going to give her more money. Bryant testified that she spent the night of December 23 at Stella's home and that she left early in the morning on December 24 to ride the bus to Indianapolis, where she panhandled as she usually did. Before leaving Stella's for the last time, Bryant testified that she took her usual sponge bath in the sink and then yelled up to Stella before leaving. She claimed that she did not see Stella that morning. Bryant explained that she called Stella that afternoon because she was unable to take a bus home due to the holiday schedule. Bryant denied ever screaming at the neighbors, yelling at the grass, pulling out her hair, feeling paranoid, or knowing anything about Stella's death. She also denied knowing how Stella's blood got on her pants.

[25] Dr. Olive, a clinical forensic psychologist, provided expert testimony based on medical records from Larue Carter, police reports, legal documents, and witness statements and interviews, as well as an "abridged" interview of Bryant that lasted about ninety minutes, during which Bryant denied killing Stella, maintained that she did not recall any details, and denied being mentally ill. *Transcript Vol. 4* at 123. Despite her denial of suffering from mental illness, Dr. Olive diagnosed Bryant as having schizophrenia.

[26] With regard to Bryant's state of mind at the time of the crime, Dr. Olive explained that because Bryant provided no insight given her outright denial that she was the one who killed Stella, he had to rely primarily on other sources of information to provide insight into Bryant's demeanor before, during, and after the offense. Specifically, he found telling evidence of flight and deception by

Bryant, which suggested to him an appreciation of wrongfulness. Dr. Olive did not believe Bryant was actively psychotic when Frances saw her on December 21 or when she was interviewed by police after the crime. Taking everything into consideration, Dr. Olive opined that Bryant became enraged at Stella after Stella told her she needed to find a new place to stay and that she was cut off financially and that Bryant was unable to control that rage. He testified that Bryant was in “massive denial” about killing Stella and that she cannot acknowledge her own conduct. *Id.* at 134. Dr. Olive did not see any evidence that Bryant was suffering from delusions or hallucinations that may have rendered her incapable of appreciating the wrongfulness of her conduct at the time of the crime. He further testified that it was possible to have schizophrenia and still appreciate the wrongfulness of your conduct, even if the person hears voices or experiences paranoia.

[27] Dr. Parker had conducted Bryant’s competency evaluation in 2007. At that time, he found Bryant was highly impaired, hearing voices, talking to herself, disoriented in thinking and behavior, and not taking care of herself, all of which were consistent with schizophrenia. He reported to the court that Bryant was not competent to stand trial.

[28] In 2019, Dr. Parker was appointed to evaluate Bryant’s sanity at the time of the offense. He reviewed all his previous records as well as other documents provided to him, including witness statements and police reports around the time of the crime, and records from Larue Carter. Dr. Parker also interviewed Bryant. As with Dr. Olive, Bryant denied killing Stella, claimed that she could

not remember, and denied experiencing symptoms of psychosis, so the interview itself was not very insightful. Dr. Parker diagnosed Bryant with schizophrenia, as she exhibited four of the five symptoms associated therewith (including auditory hallucinations). He also noted that Larue Carter had determined Bryant's IQ to be "in the range of the sixties," which is below the cutoff for intellectual disability. *Id.* at 178. As to whether Bryant appreciated the wrongfulness of her conduct, Dr. Parker considered evidence that she moved Stella's body, hid and locked Stella's body in the shed, hid the hammer, left the scene, lied to police about when she was last at Stella's house, and dismissed the idea that the blood on her clothes belonged to Stella. Such conduct suggested to Dr. Parker that Bryant "had some awareness that it would not be a good idea to place herself at her mother's home during the time of the alleged offense" and that such indicated an appreciation of the wrongfulness of her actions. *Id.* at 166. Based on his review of the information before him, Dr. Parker opined that "despite the very clear evidence of significant impairment from psychosis . . . Bryant retained a basic appreciation of the wrongfulness of her actions at the time of the alleged offense." *Id.* at 166-67.

[29] Like Dr. Olive, Dr. Parker agreed that a person can have a mental disease or defect and suffer from hallucinations and yet, still appreciate the wrongfulness of their conduct. Dr. Parker testified that it is relatively uncommon for psychosis to prevent a person from appreciating the wrongfulness of their actions. Dr. Parker found no evidence that Bryant suffered hallucinations that told her to kill Stella.

[30] At the conclusion of the evidence, the jury rejected Bryant’s insanity defense and found her guilty but mentally ill. On February 22, 2020, the trial court sentenced Bryant to fifty-five years executed. Bryant now appeals.

Discussion & Decision

[31] To convict a criminal defendant, the State must prove each element of the offense beyond a reasonable doubt. Ind. Code § 35-41-4-1(a). A defendant, however, may avoid criminal responsibility by invoking the insanity defense. *Myers v. State*, 27 N.E.3d 1069, 1075 (Ind. 2015). This plea requires the defendant to prove by a preponderance of the evidence (1) that she suffers from a “mental disease or defect”² and (2) that the “mental disease or defect” rendered her unable to appreciate the wrongfulness of her conduct at the time of the offense. I.C. §§ 35-41-4-1(b), 35-41-3-6(a). Proof of mental illness alone is not enough. *Myers*, 27 N.E.3d at 1075.

[32] Because the jury rejected her insanity defense, Bryant faces a heavy burden as she is now appealing from a negative judgment. *Lawson v. State*, 966 N.E.2d 1273, 1279 (Ind. Ct. App. 2012) (citing *Galloway v. State*, 938 N.E.2d 699, 708 (Ind. 2010)), *trans. denied*. Further, a factfinder’s determination that “a defendant was not insane at the time of the offense warrants substantial deference from” an appellate court. *Galloway*, 938 N.E.2d at 709. On review,

² A “mental disease or defect” is defined as “a severely abnormal mental condition that grossly and demonstrably impairs a person’s perception, but the term does not include an abnormality manifested only by repeated unlawful or antisocial conduct.” I.C. § 35-41-3-6(b)

we do not reweigh evidence, reassess witness credibility, or disturb the factfinder's reasonable inferences. *Id.* at 708. We will instead affirm the conviction unless “the evidence is without conflict and leads only to the conclusion that the defendant was insane when the crime was committed.”

Thompson v. State, 804 N.E.2d 1146, 1149 (Ind. 2004). “[A]s a matter of law, a person is either sane or insane at the time of the crime; there is no intermediate ground.” *Galloway*, 938 N.E.2d at 711 (quoting *Marley v. State*, 747 N.E.2d 1123, 1128 (Ind. 2001)).

[33] Here, the State has never disputed that, as found by both expert witnesses and suspected by Stella's family, Bryant suffers from schizophrenia, a mental disease or defect. Bryant thus satisfied the first element of the insanity statute. As noted above, however, mental illness alone is not sufficient to relieve criminal responsibility. *See Myers*, 27 N.E.3d at 1075; *Galloway* 938 N.E.3d at 708. A defendant who is mentally ill must also establish that he or she was unable to appreciate the wrongfulness of his or her conduct. Where a defendant fails to establish this second element of the insanity defense, the defendant may be found guilty but mentally ill (“GBMI”).

[34] The only contested issue is whether, given her schizophrenia, Bryant appreciated the wrongfulness of her conduct at the time of the murder. As our Supreme Court has explained, this determination is a question for the trier of fact. *Thompson*, 804 N.E.2d at 1149. In making a sanity determination, the factfinder may consider all relevant evidence. *Barcroft v. State*, 111 N.E.3d 997, 1002-03 (Ind. 2018). This evidence may include opinion testimony from expert

witnesses, opinion testimony from lay witnesses, proof of the defendant's demeanor before, during, and after the offense, and the defendant's history of mental illness. *Id.* at 1003, 1008. Although "central" to a determination of sanity, expert testimony is "purely advisory, not conclusive." *Id.* at 1003 (citing *Cate v. State*, 644 N.E.2d 546, 547 (Ind. 1994)). Indeed, the trier of fact is free to disregard or discredit expert testimony and instead rely on other probative evidence from which to infer a defendant's sanity. *Galloway*, 938 N.E.2d at 709. Other probative evidence may include testimony from lay witnesses, which can be useful in identifying the defendant's behavior before, during, and after a crime and which may be more indicative of mental health at the time of the crime than mental examinations that occur weeks, months, or even years later. *Barcroft*, 111 N.E.3d at 1003-04. A factfinder may also rely on circumstantial evidence as to a defendant's actions, statements, and demeanor before, during, and after a crime to infer his or her mental state. *Id.* at 1004.

[35] Here, as set out in detail above, both expert witnesses, Dr. Parker and Dr. Olive, opined that Bryant, despite suffering from schizophrenia, appreciated the wrongfulness of her conduct at the time of the murder. On appeal, Bryant attempts to discredit the doctors' expert opinions by pointing out what she perceives to be flaws and concessions in their evaluations that she maintains undermines their ultimate determination that she was sane at the time of the offense. Specifically, she asserts that Dr. Parker failed to review key witness statements about her mental health history and behaviors and instead relied primarily on police reports. With regard to Dr. Olive, Bryant claims that while

he reviewed witness statements, he failed to consider that Bryant was treated previously for mental illness on two occasions.

[36] Bryant's attack on the credibility of the expert evidence is unavailing. First, we note that at trial, Bryant questioned Dr. Olive regarding his lack of knowledge about the incident a few months before the murder when Miller observed Bryant leaning over his fence and yelling at the grass for laughing at her. Dr. Olive agreed that this incident could have been prompted by visual or auditory hallucinations, which is what Bryant argued to the jury during closing. Similarly, Bryant questioned Dr. Parker as to whether he was aware of her prior hospitalizations in the 1990s, and he responded that he was not. Bryant thus challenged the basis upon which both doctors rendered their opinions. Notwithstanding Bryant's challenges, neither Dr. Parker nor Dr. Olive altered their opinion as to Bryant's sanity at the time of the crime.

[37] In addition to the expert opinions, the jury heard evidence of Bryant's behavior and mental illness over the years prior to the murder through testimony from Stella's family and Stella's neighbor. No one questioned that Bryant suffered from schizophrenia or that she experienced hallucinations.³ The jury was thus presented with the very evidence that Bryant claims was crucial to finding she was insane at the time of the murder. It was within the jury's prerogative as to

³ Bryant asserts that "it is very possible that she was hearing voices that told her to kill her mother" or that she "could have been in a delusional state on the night of the killing, believing her mother was possessed, was going to harm her and therefore needed to be killed and locked up." *Appellant's Brief* at 36. There is no evidence in the record to support such assertion.

the weight to afford the expert opinions in light of her challenges thereto and the evidence presented at trial.

[38] Bryant also directs us to *Payne v. State*, 144 N.E.3d 706 (Ind. 2020), *Barcroft*, 111 N.E.3d 997, and *Galloway*, 938 N.E.2d 699, as support for her claim that the jury erred in rejecting her insanity defense. Her reliance on these cases is unpersuasive.

[39] In *Payne*, three experts determined the defendant was insane, but the jury rejected that evidence and found him guilty but mentally ill. A majority of the Supreme Court held that the unanimous expert opinion and the defendant's well-documented and consistent history of mental illness supported only the conclusion that he was insane when the crimes were committed. *Payne*, 144 N.E.3d at 713. In contrast, here, the unanimous expert opinion was that Bryant was sane and there was evidence from which it could be reasonably inferred that Bryant did in fact appreciate the wrongfulness of her conduct at the time of the murder.

[40] In *Barcroft*, the trial court rejected the unanimous expert opinion (which was provided by Dr. Parker and Dr. Olive) that defendant was insane at the time of the offense and found defendant guilty but mentally ill. A majority of the Supreme Court found that evidence of the defendant's demeanor before, during, and after the crime supported the trial court's rejection of insanity. *Barcroft*, 111 N.E.3d at 1005. The majority noted that the experts, although unanimous in their ultimate opinion, offered conflicting diagnoses, and that the

defendant was not diagnosed with schizophrenia until after her arrest. Further, the majority noted that the defendant's demeanor before, during, and after the offense could reasonably have been viewed as demonstrating a consciousness of guilt. In light of such, the majority affirmed the factfinder's determination that the defendant was sane at the time of the crime even though such was at odds with the expert opinions presented. Here, the experts were unanimous in their finding of sanity. Moreover, there was evidence from which the jury could have reasonably determined that Bryant appreciated the wrongfulness of her actions.

[41] In *Galloway*, a majority of the Supreme Court held that the unanimous expert opinion of insanity was not sufficiently rebutted by demeanor evidence relied on by the factfinder to reject insanity. 938 N.E.2d at 715. Further, the majority found that there was no lay opinion testimony that conflicted with the expert opinions. *Id.* at 714-15.

[42] Here, there was other evidence presented at trial that is consistent with the experts' opinions. Just days before Stella's murder, Frances observed Bryant's anger at Stella after Stella told her that she would have to find a new place to stay after the new year and that she would not be providing her with money. Until then, Bryant had lived exclusively off her inheritance and money from the sale of the family farm. Stella's ultimatum meant that Bryant would be homeless and without financial support.

[43] Further, during commission of the offense, the evidence shows that Bryant struck Stella on the head with a hammer inside the house. Blood smears throughout the house show that Stella was able to make her way out the back door and around the side of the house before Bryant struck her again. Bryant then drug Stella to the shed in the back. Bryant took the time to gather the key to the padlock on the shed, unlock the shed, and then drag Stella inside. She then closed the door to the shed, locked the padlock, and placed a brick against the door. Bryant returned the padlock key to the house but placed it in an unusual place in the pantry rather than its customary place on a hook inside the back door. Bryant placed the hammer at the back of a utensil drawer rather than its usual place under the sink. Bryant then cleaned herself up before leaving. There was ample evidence that Bryant consistently had dirty and matted hair, dirty hands and long fingernails, and dirty clothes. When located at the bus station, Bryant did not appear disheveled; her hair was not matted, her hands were clean, and her fingernails were short. Although her pants were covered in Stella's blood, Bryant had taken steps to remove blood from her body. In addition, Bryant had broken her routine by calling Stella repeatedly after the murder and not taking the bus home in the evening. The jury could reasonably infer from this evidence that Bryant appreciated the wrongfulness of her conduct in murdering Stella. Bryant's arguments that her actions of putting things back in order and fleeing the scene were part of her routine and that the blood on her clothes was evidence that she was not hiding her murder of Stella were presented to and rejected by the jury.

[44] We also note the evidence that when confronted after the murder, Bryant initially lied to the police about the last time she saw Stella, claiming that it had been several days. At trial she admitted to having been at Stella's the night of December 23 and leaving the morning of December 24. Several officers who interacted with Bryant described her as quiet, but cooperative. The jury was also afforded the opportunity to assess Bryant's demeanor when a recording of Bryant's interview with the police was played at trial. In all, there was ample evidence, from both expert witnesses and demeanor evidence before, during, and after the murder, from which the jury could have reasonably concluded that Bryant appreciated the wrongfulness of her actions and was therefore sane when she murdered Stella.

[45] Judgment affirmed.

Riley, J. and May, J., concur.