

People v Brates

2019 NY Slip Op 33970(U)

January 30, 2019

County Court, Westchester County

Docket Number: 18-0223

Judge: Anne E. Minihan

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COUNTY COURT: STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER

FILED
AND ENTERED
ON 1-31 2019
WESTCHESTER

-----X
THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

-against-

EVA BRATES,

DECISION & ORDER
Ind No.: 18-0223

FILED

JAN 31 2019

TIMOTHY C. IDONI
COUNTY CLERK
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER

Defendant.

-----X
MINIHAN, J.

Defendant, by Westchester County Indictment No. 18-0223, is charged with Aggravated Driving While Intoxicated-Child in Vehicle (VTL § 1192[2-a][b]), Aggravated Driving While Intoxicated (VTL § 1192[2-a][a]), Driving While Intoxicated (VTL § 1192[3]), Speeding (VTL § 1180[d]), Driving to Left of Pavement (VTL § 1126[a]), Improper/Unsafe Turn Without Signal (VTL § 1163[a]), Failure to Use Designated Lane (VTL § 1128[c]), Failure to Comply (VTL § 1102) and Consumption of Alcohol in Vehicle (VTL § 1227). Defendant has filed an omnibus motion consisting of a Notice of Motion, an Affirmation in Support, and a Memorandum of Law. In response thereto, the People have filed an Affirmation in Opposition together with a Memorandum of Law. Upon consideration of these papers, the stenographic transcript of the grand jury minutes and the Consent Discovery Order entered in this case, this Court disposes of this motion as follows:

A.

MOTION to INSPECT and to DISMISS and/or REDUCE
CPL ARTICLE 190

The court grants the defendant's motion to the limited extent that the court has conducted, with the consent of the People, an *in camera* inspection of the stenographic transcription of the grand jury proceedings. Upon such review, the court finds no basis upon which to grant defendant's application to dismiss or reduce the indictment.

The defendant, who bears the burden of refuting with substantial evidence the presumption of regularity which attaches to official court proceedings (*People v Pichardo*, 168 AD2d 577 [2d Dept 1990]), has offered no sworn factual allegations in support of her argument that the grand jury proceedings were defective. The minutes reveal that a quorum of the grand jurors was present during the presentation of evidence, and that the Assistant District Attorney properly instructed the grand jury on the law and only permitted those grand jurors who heard all the evidence to vote the matter (*see People v Calbud*, 49 NY2d 389 [1980]; *People v Valles*, 62 NY2d 36 [1984]; *People v Burch*, 108 AD3d 679 [2d Dept 2013]).

The evidence presented to the grand jury, if accepted as true, is legally sufficient to establish every element of each offense charged, including the culpable mental state applicable to each offense (*see* CPL 210.30[2]; Penal Law § 15.05[1], [2]). “Courts assessing the sufficiency of the evidence before a grand jury must evaluate whether the evidence, viewed most favorably to the People, if unexplained and uncontradicted--and deferring all questions as to the weight or quality of the evidence--would warrant conviction” (*People v Mills*, 1 NY3d 269, 274-275 [2002]). Legally sufficient evidence means competent evidence which, if accepted as true, would establish every element of an offense charged and the defendant’s commission thereof (CPL 70.10[1]; *see People v Flowers*, 138 AD3d 1138, 1139 [2d Dept 2016]). “In the context of a Grand Jury proceeding, legal sufficiency means prima facie proof of the crimes charged, not proof beyond a reasonable doubt” (*People v Jessup*, 90 AD3d 782, 783 [2d Dept 2011]). “The reviewing court’s inquiry is limited to whether the facts, if proven, and the inferences that logically flow from those facts supply proof of every element of the charged crimes, and whether the Grand Jury could rationally have drawn the guilty inference. That other, innocent inferences could possibly be drawn from those facts is irrelevant to the sufficiency inquiry as long as the Grand Jury could rationally have drawn the guilty inference” (*People v Bello*, 92 NY2d 523, 526 [1998]).

Based upon the *in camera* review, since this court does not find release of the grand jury minutes or any portion thereof necessary to assist it in making any determinations and as the defendant has not set forth a compelling or particularized need for the production of the grand jury minutes, defendant’s application for a copy of the grand jury minutes is denied (*People v Jang*, 17 AD3d 693 [2d Dept 2005]; CPL 190.25[4][a]).

B.

MOTION TO SUPPRESS NOTICED STATEMENTS

The People served defendant with two CPL 710.30(1)(a) notices of statements which defendant allegedly made on July 31, 2017, to members of the Bedford Police Department. Defendant’s motion to suppress the alleged statements as unconstitutionally obtained is granted to the extent that a *Huntley* hearing shall be held prior to trial to determine whether any statement allegedly made by defendant was involuntarily made within the meaning of CPL 60.45 (*see* CPL 710.20(3); CPL 710.60[3][b]; *People v Weaver*, 49 NY2d 1012 [1980]), obtained in violation of defendant’s Sixth Amendment right to counsel, and/or obtained in violation of defendant’s Fourth Amendment rights (*see Dunaway v New York*, 442 US 200 [1979]).

C.

MOTION TO SUPPRESS EVIDENCE

Defendant moves to suppress all physical evidence seized by the police, particularly the purse and bottle of vodka found in the vehicle, on the basis that such evidence is tainted fruit of her unlawful arrest. Defendant also seeks to suppress the results of the blood test on the grounds that it was unlawfully performed without a warrant or her consent. Defendant's motion to suppress evidence is granted solely to the extent of ordering a pre-trial *Mapp* hearing to determine the propriety of any search which resulted in the seizure of evidence (*see Mapp v Ohio*, 367 US 643 [1961]), including the results of the blood test, to determine, inter alia, whether the search of the vehicle and defendant's person was incident to a lawful arrest (*see People v Belton*, 55 NY2d 52-53 [1982]), whether items were seized in plain view (*see People v Brown*, 96 NY2d 80, 88-90 [2001]), and whether defendant consented to the blood test (*see People v Gore*, 117 AD3d 845, 846 [2d Dept 2014]). The hearing will also address whether any evidence was obtained in violation of the defendant's Fourth Amendment rights (*see Dunaway v New York*, 442 US 200 [1979]).

D.

MOTION for SANDOVAL and VENTIMIGLIA HEARINGS

Defendant moves for a pre-trial hearing to permit the trial court to determine the extent, if at all, to which the People may inquire into defendant's prior criminal convictions, and prior uncharged criminal, vicious or immoral conduct. On the People's consent, the court directs that a pre-trial hearing be conducted pursuant to *People v Sandoval* (34 NY2d 371 [1974]). At said hearing, the People shall be required to notify defendant of all specific instances of her criminal, prior uncharged criminal, vicious or immoral conduct of which they have knowledge and which they intend to use to impeach defendant's credibility if she elects to testify at trial (CPL 240.43).

At the hearing, defendant shall bear the burden of identifying any instances of her prior misconduct that she submits the People should not be permitted to use to impeach her credibility. Defendant shall be required to identify the basis of her belief that each event or incident may be unduly prejudicial to her ability to testify as a witness on her own behalf (*see People v Matthews*, 68 NY2d 118 [1986]; *People v Malphurs*, 111 AD2d 266 [2d Dept 1985]).

To the extent that defendant's application is for a hearing pursuant to *People v Ventimiglia* (52 NY2d 350 [1981]), it is denied since the People have not indicated an intention to use evidence of any prior bad act or uncharged crimes of defendant during its case in chief (*see People v Molineaux*, 168 NY 264 [1901]). If the People move to introduce such evidence, defendant may renew this aspect of her motion.

E.

MOTION for DISCOVERY, DISCLOSURE and INSPECTION
CPL ARTICLE 240

The parties have entered into a stipulation by way of a Consent Discovery Order consenting to the enumerated discovery in this case. Defendant's motion for discovery is granted to the extent provided for in Criminal Procedure Law Article 240. If there any further items discoverable pursuant to Criminal Procedure Law Article 240 which have not been provided to defendant pursuant to the Consent Discovery Order, they are to be provided forthwith.

As to the defendant's demand for exculpatory material, the People have acknowledged their continuing duty to disclose exculpatory material at the earliest possible date upon its discovery (*see Brady v Maryland*, 373 US 83 [1963]; *Giglio v United States*, 405 US 150 [1972]). In the event that the People are or become aware of any material which is arguably exculpatory and they are not willing to consent to its disclosure to the defendant, they are directed to immediately disclose such material to the Court to permit an *in camera* inspection and determination as to whether such must be disclosed to the defendant.

As to the defendant's demand for scientific related discovery, the People have acknowledged their continuing duty to disclose any written report or document concerning a physical or mental examination or test that the People intend to introduce, or the person who created them, at trial pursuant to CPL 240.20(1)(c).

Defendant's motion for a further Bill of Particulars is denied. The Bill of Particulars set forth in the Consent Discovery Order provided to the defendant has adequately informed the defendant of the substance of her alleged conduct and in all respects complies with CPL 200.95.

The People recognize their continuing duty to disclose the terms of any deal or agreement made between the People and any prosecution witness at the earliest possible date (*see People v Steadman*, 82 NY2d 1 [1993]; *Giglio v United States*, 405 US 150 [1972]; *Brady v Maryland*, 373 US 83 [1963]; *People v Wooley*, 200 AD2d 644 [2d Dept 1994]).

Except to the extent that defendant's application has been specifically granted herein, it is otherwise denied as seeking material or information beyond the scope of discovery (*see People v Colavito*, 87 NY2d 423 [1996]; *Matter of Brown v Grosso*, 285 AD2d 642 [2d Dept 2001]; *Matter of Brown v Appelman*, 241 AD2d 279 [2d Dept 1998]; *Matter of Catterson v Jones*, 229 AD2d 435 [2d Dept 1996]; *Matter of Catterson v Rohl*, 202 AD2d 420 [2d Dept 1994]).

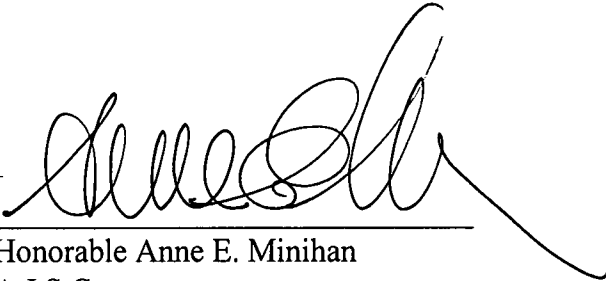
F.

MOTION to CONDUCT PRE-TRIAL HEARINGS
TWO WEEKS in ADVANCE of TRIAL

The defendant's motion to schedule pre-trial hearings two weeks in advance of trial is denied. The hearings will be scheduled at a time that is convenient to the Court, upon due consideration of all of its other cases and obligations.

The foregoing constitutes the opinion, decision and order of this court.

Dated: White Plains, New York
January 30, 2019



Honorable Anne E. Minihan
A.J.S.C.

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