

Supreme Court of Florida

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2008

CASE NOS.: SC07-80 and SC07-354
Lower Tribunal No(s): 2005-70,305(11F),
2005-71,125(11F),
2006-70,570(11F),
2006-70,766(11F),
2006-70,909(11F),
2007-30,805(11F)

THE FLORIDA BAR

vs. JOHN BRUCE THOMPSON

Complainant(s)

Respondent(s)

The referee has filed a corrected report recommending that respondent, John Bruce Thompson, be permanently disbarred without leave to apply for readmission to The Florida Bar. Respondent submitted a petition for review of the referee's report. The Clerk did not accept the petition for review for filing. This action was in accord with this Court's opinion dated March 20, 2008, which sanctioned respondent for abusive filings and barred him from filing on his own behalf. The sanction opinion provided, in pertinent part: "the Clerk of this Court is hereby instructed to reject for filing any future pleadings, petitions, motions, documents, or other filings submitted by John Bruce Thompson, unless signed by a member in good standing of The Florida Bar other than himself." Fla. Bar v. Thompson, 979 So. 2d 917, 921 (Fla. 2008). The opinion also noted: "in sanctioning respondent, we are requiring him to retain qualified counsel so that his arguments might be properly presented through the appropriate procedures in the appropriate forum. We do not limit such counsel's ability to challenge the referee's findings and recommendations on review." Id. at 919.

Ignoring this bar on self-submitted filings, respondent has submitted numerous filings in violation of the sanction opinion, including the petition for review of the referee's report. The Clerk properly rejected each of these submissions. Thus, there being no authorized petition for review filed, and the time period to seek review has passed, the Court has treated this as an uncontested case. The Court has reviewed the 169-page corrected report of the referee filed on July 16, 2008, for sufficiency and has determined that permanent disbarment is merited on this record. (This report is posted on the Court's public website). The report

PUBLIC RECORD

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details the extensive misconduct of respondent and his complete lack of remorse. In her report, the referee states:

Over a very extended period of time involving a number of totally unrelated cases and individuals, [r]espondent has demonstrated a pattern of conduct to strike out harshly, extensively, repeatedly and willfully to simply try to bring as much difficulty, distraction and anguish to those he considers in opposition to his causes. He does not proceed within the guidelines of appropriate professional behavior, but rather uses other means available to intimidate, harass, or bring public disrepute to those whom he perceives oppose him.

Among the extensive findings of fact presented in the report, the Court takes particular note of the following which occurred during the three-year period at issue in five counts in these cases: (1) respondent made false statements of material fact to courts and repeatedly violated a court order; (2) respondent communicated the subject of representation directly with clients of opposing counsel; (3) respondent engaged in prohibited ex parte communications; (4) respondent publicized and sent hundreds of pages of vitriolic and disparaging missives, letters, faxes, and press releases, to the affected individuals; (5) respondent targeted an individual who was not involved with respondent in any way, merely due to "the position [the individual] holds in state and national politics;" (6) respondent falsely, recklessly, and publicly accused a judge as being amenable to the "fixing" of cases; (7) respondent sent courts inappropriate and offensive sexual materials; (8) respondent falsely and publicly accused various attorneys and their clients of engaging in a conspiracy/enterprise involving "the criminal distribution of sexual materials to minors" and attempted to get prosecuting authorities to charge these attorneys and their clients for racketeering and extortion; (9) respondent harassed the former client of an attorney in an effort to get the client to use its influence to persuade the attorney to withdraw a defamation suit filed by the attorney against respondent; and (10) respondent retaliated against attorneys who filed Bar complaints against him for his unethical conduct by asserting to their clients, government officials, politicians, the media, female lawyers in their law firm, employees, personal friends, acquaintances, and their wives, that the attorneys were criminal

pornographers who objectify women. The Court concludes that the facts, as even more extensively detailed in the referee's report, support the referee's numerous recommendations as to guilt.

The referee cited various cases indicating that disbarment is an appropriate sanction and recommended permanent disbarment because "[r]espondent has repeatedly stated in these proceedings that he will not change his conduct" and she "finds no evidence whatsoever to indicate that [r]espondent is amenable to rehabilitation, or even remotely appreciates the basis upon which a need or purpose for such rehabilitation is warranted." Indeed, as noted by the referee:

Respondent has repeatedly failed to follow the appropriate rules and orders throughout these disciplinary proceedings as evidenced by the granting of the Bar's Motion for Sanctions and the Supreme Court of Florida's orders of February 19, 2008 and March 20, 2008, wherein the Court found that [r]espondent "abused the legal system by submitting numerous, frivolous and inappropriate filings," despite being warned not to do so.

In fact, the referee reported that respondent walked out of her courtroom at the final hearing in this matter because she would not allow him to "to turn the [d]isciplinary proceeding into a press conference." Based on the record before it, the Court agrees that respondent is not amenable to rehabilitation. Further, the Court approves the referee's recommendation that permanent disbarment is the appropriate sanction.

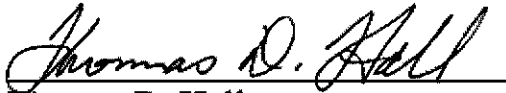
The Court approves the corrected referee's report and John Bruce Thompson is permanently disbarred, effective thirty days from the date of this order so that respondent can close out his practice and protect the interests of existing clients. If respondent notifies the Court in writing that he is no longer practicing and does not need the thirty days to protect existing clients, this Court will enter an order making the permanent disbarment effective immediately. Respondent shall accept no new business from the date this order is filed.

Judgment is entered for The Florida Bar, 651 East Jefferson Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2300, for recovery of costs from John Bruce Thompson in the amount of \$43,675.35, for which sum let execution issue.

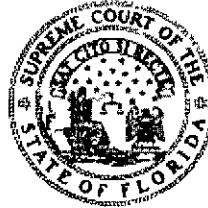
Not final until time expires to file motion for rehearing, and if filed, determined. The filing of a motion for rehearing shall not alter the effective date of this permanent disbarment. Consistent with this Court's sanction order, no motion for rehearing will be considered unless signed by a member in good standing of The Florida Bar other than respondent.

QUINCE, C.J., and WELLS, ANSTEAD, PARIENTE, LEWIS, BELL, and CANADY, JJ., concur.

A True Copy
Test:



Thomas D. Hall
Clerk, Supreme Court



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Served:

HON. DAVA J. TUNIS, JUDGE
JOHN F. HARKNESS, JR.
KENNETH LAWRENCE MARVIN
SHEILA MARIE TUMA
BARRY S. RICHARD
JOHN BRUCE THOMPSON