

Accused hit-and-run driver could have been oblivious to crime, doctors say

Man's depression could have played a role

By [DOUG McINTYRE](#), SUN MEDIA

Fatal hit and run suspect Colin Jones' mental state may have made him oblivious to his deadly collision with a pedestrian, defence doctors said today.

Both a psychiatrist and psychologist told court Jones was suffering from depression at the time of the crash which killed Lindsay Giacomelli.

And Dr. Tom Dalby and Dr. Yuri Metelitsa said Jones' condition could have so preoccupied him it left him unaware he had struck and killed Giacomelli in a southeast crosswalk.

Dalby, a psychologist, told defence lawyer Balfour Der his client would have to be a psychopath if he had calmly driven away and gone home for pizza knowing he had struck Giacomelli.

"What would it take to strike someone, casually drive away, go home, continue your life, order a pizza?" Dalby said.

"What it would take is a callous, psychopathic individual," he told Der.

"There was nothing we saw which would, in fact, indicate Mr. Jones was anything like that."

Jones is charged with leaving the scene of an accident to escape criminal liability in connection with the March 17, 2005, collision on Bonaventure Dr. S.E.

Dalby testified it's possible Jones' depression, and the stresses of work and his marriage breakdown, caused him to be so inattentive he may have been unaware of the crash.

"Most people have had the experience in driving their car and realize they haven't been paying attention," he said.

"A person who's depressed and distracted, their attention is malfunctioning," Dalby said.

"From the facts given to me I think it's possible that he was not aware."

Metelitsa agreed Jones' depression may have played a part in him leaving the accident scene.

"He might have had problems being able to perceive what actually happened," the psychiatrist said.

In cross-examination, Crown prosecutor David Torske suggested it was as likely

Jones was feigning his claim to have no knowledge of his collision with Giacomelli.

But Dalby said it would be difficult for a lay person to convincingly fake a lack of memory of certain events.

“The way they present it is often amateurish, because they don’t know the rules of memory,” Dalby said.

He said the infamous case of Nazi officer Rudolph Hess, who fooled doctors into believing he had no memory of the Third Reich before the truth came out, didn’t apply.

“The science of fooling people way back in the forties — (doctors) did not have what we have today,” Dalby said.

Torske is scheduled to call two doctors on Thursday.