

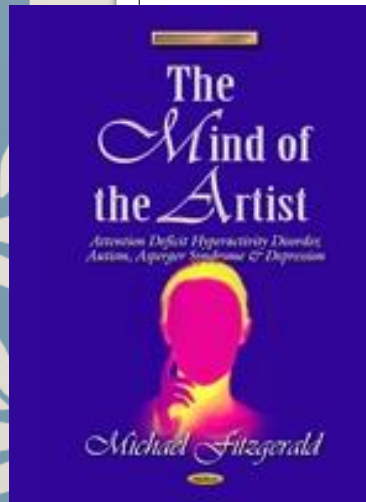


COMEDY ON THE SPECTRUM

AUTISM & COMEDY SYMPOSIUM
UNIVERSITY OF KENT, CANTERBURY
SAT, 30 JAN 2016

Michael Fitzgerald

COMEDIANS WITH AUTISM (FITZGERALD, 2015)



Groucho Marx (Fitzgerald, 2015)

- 1. called “Groucho” because of “Serious Demeanour” (Chaldler, 2007)
- 2. Poor school progress
- 3. Brilliant at Maths (Marx, 2008)
- 4. Aggressive Humour and “Scant Sympathy” (Chandler, 2007)
- 5. Hyperkinetic
- 6. “Reserved Private Individual” (Chandler, 2007)
- 7. “Little Emotion” (Chandler, 2007)
- 8. 3 Divorces – “Paying alimony is like feeding hay to a dead horse”



Peter Sellers

- Childhood
 - Very poor Peer Relationships
 - Oppositional
 - Behaviourally disorder
 - Cruelty to Animals
 - Loner
 - Repetitive behaviour - Switches on and off lights



Peter Sellers ..

Cont'd/.

- Wanderer
- Fantasies
- Massive Memory (Savant type)
- Identity diffusion, “ I have no personality of my own” (Lewis, 2004)
- Death anxiety
- “Spiteful and neglectful parent” – Son
- Aggressive Humour

Tony Hancock (Fitzgerald 2015, Goodwin 2000)

- Speech & Language Problems
- Preservation of Sameness
- Sleep Difficulties
- Loner
- Oppositional Defiant
- High Pitched Tone of Voice



Tony Hancock (Fitzgerald 2015, Goodwin 2000) Cont'd/

- Spiritualist
- Very Poor Peer Relationships
- Suspicious
- Aggressive Humour
- Special Interest - Philosophy (e.g. Spinoza)
- Mystic

Kenneth Williams (Fitzgerald 2015, Davies 1993)

- Always Naive And Immature Emotionally
- Clingy To Mother
- Solitary
- Poor School Progress
- Drawing and Trained As Litho Draughtsman
- Dyspraxia



Kenneth Williams

(Fitzgerald 2015, Davies 1993) cont'd/

- Diaries
- “Home Bird”/Contradictory
- Jekyll & Hyde Type Personality
- High Pitched Tone Of Voice
- Obsessed With Bowel Movements
- Suicide By Overdose

W. C. Fields (Fitzgerald 2105, Curtis 2004)

- School - Oppositional And Disruptive
- Poor school Progress
- Massive Observer
- Outsider And Disconnected - Loner
- Poor Social Relationships
- Aspergers/ADHD



W. C. Fields (Fitzgerald 2105, Curtis 2004) Cont'd/.

- Odd Voice
- Hyper Sensory Problems
- Contradictions (e.g.) Generous And Stingy, according To John Cleese
- “Solipsistic”
- Alcoholic

Spike Milligan (Fitzgerald 2015, Farnes 2004)

- My Personal Contact –
Queue at Dublin Airport –
“Asked for Low Fat Sugar”
- Contradictory (e.g.) “Loyal”
And “Traitorous”
- Musical
- Jekyll & Hyde According To
Daily Mail
- Child Like and immature
- Sensory Issues



Spike Milligan (Fitzgerald 2015, Farnes 2004) Cont'd/.

- Volcanic Emotions
- Major Mood Swings-ECT (Manic-Depressive)
- Suspicious
- Poor Social Relationships
- 3+ Marriages “Harems”
- “Crank Letter Writer”

Spike Milligan (Fitzgerald 2015, Farnes 2004) Cont'd/.

- Anti-Semitic At Times
- Stubborn
- Screaming Child
- Massive Imagination
- Enigmatically
- Eccentric

Jimmy O Dea (Fitzgerald 2015, Ryan 1990)

- Shy
- Perfectionists
- Naive
- Immature Emotionally
- Dictatorial
- Contradictory
- Ritualistic



Jimmy O Dea (Fitzgerald 2015, Ryan 1990) Cont'd/.

- Preservation Of Sameness
- Loner
- Solitary Walker
- Massive Observer
- Listener
- Controlling And Dominating
- Precise Language

William Shakespeare

(Fitzgerald & Kenny 2014, Bryson 2008)

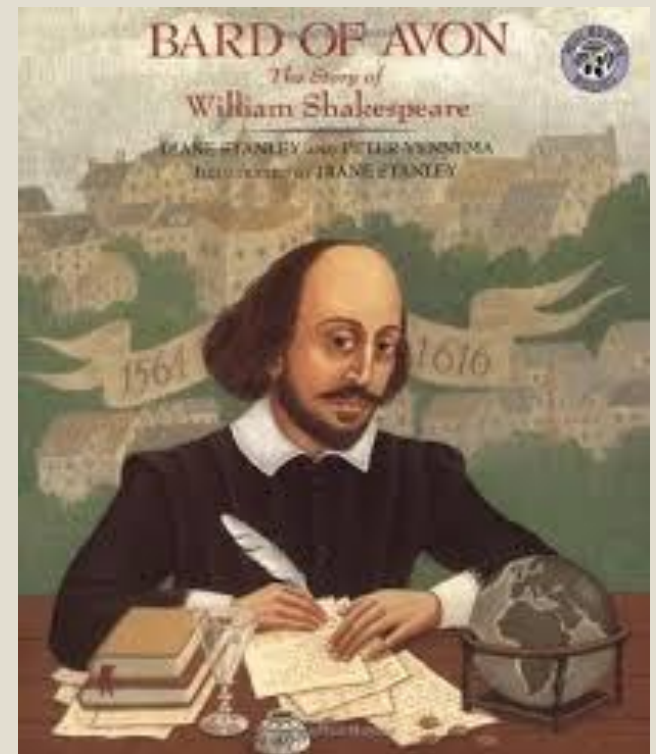
- Balance Of Probabilities
- Father –
 - John Shakespeare
 - “Skilled Craftsmen”
 - Poor Financial Manager
 - Novelty Seeker, Reckless



William Shakespeare (Fitzgerald & Kenny 2014, Bryson 2008)Cont'd/

- **William (Bard)**

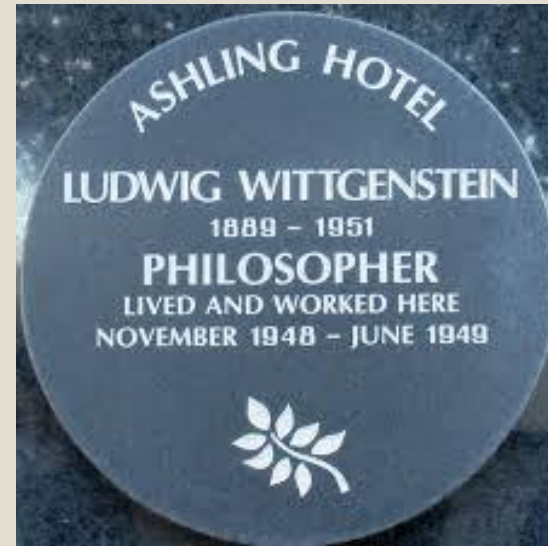
- Narrow Interests: Writing, Planets, Military Matters, Medical Matters, Legal Matters.
- Fascination With Language
- Workaholics
- Original



William Shakespeare (Fitzgerald & Kenny 2014, Bryson 2008) Cont'd/.

- **William (Bard)**
- Neologisms / New Words
- “Seeing bits and putting them together in wholes”
- Confused Fact and Fiction
- Identity Diffusion - Homoerotic Writing
- Long separation From wife when in was in London (Query ,Autistic phemomen?)

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951)



Wittgenstein's humour

- Witty, childlike humour
- Simple and uncomplicated
- Crude
- Nonsense humour
- Nonverbal humour - mimicry

'A fledgling leaves the nest to try out its wings. On returning, it discovers that an orange has taken its place. 'What are you doing there' asked the fledgling. 'Ma-me-aid,' replies the orange.

Lewis Carroll (1832-1898)



Carroll's Humour

- Nonsense humour
- Similarities with Wittgenstein (nonsense, logical confusion, language)

She (Alice) ate a little bit, and said anxiously to herself, "Which way? Which way?" holding her hand on the top of her head to feel which way it was growing, and she was surprised to find that she remained the same size. (Alice in Wonderland, page 10)

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