

Friday, March 17 2000
(This is an unedited, uncorrected transcript.)

BARBARA WALTERS, ABCNEWS

Good evening and welcome to 20/20 Friday. Tonight, a special hour — The mystery, the tragedy, the case of John and Patsy Ramsey. As you know, three years ago, on Christmas night, their daughter, JonBenet, was brutally murdered at home. From the beginning, suspicion fell on her parents. It shadows them to this day. Could John and Patsy Ramsey have killed their own child in such a horrific way? Why did police suspect them? And if they didn't commit the crime, who did? Tonight, for the first time, the Ramseys tell me the story of their nightmare, hoping, they say, that their appearance here might draw out information about JonBenet's murder. For the same reason, they have written a book titled *The Death of Innocence* which is being published today. We will also show you for the first time on television, actual police photographs of the crime scene. Be assured they will not be overly graphic or distasteful. So, now, the Ramseys' story... All the questions answered with no lawyers present... No holds barred.

BARBARA WALTERS Mr. and Mrs. Ramsey, did either of you have anything to do with the death of your daughter?

JOHN RAMSEY No.

PATSY RAMSEY No.

BARBARA WALTERS Mr. Ramsey, did you kill JonBenet?

JOHN RAMSEY No, I did not.

BARBARA WALTERS Mrs. Ramsey, did you kill your daughter?

PATSY RAMSEY No, I did not kill my daughter.

BARBARA WALTERS How do you feel when I ask you these questions?

PATSY RAMSEY [SIGHS] Insulted, pain, hurtful. How can I tell you how much I love my daughter. I love her from the depths of my being. It's just unimaginable.

BARBARA (V/O) Unimaginable, too, that the life of this six-year-old could be snuffed out so suddenly and so viciously. JonBenet Ramsey was a child filled with promise.

PATSY RAMSEY She was a ball of fire. She could stand on her head. She could hula-hoop. She was an entertainer from the word go.

JOHN RAMSEY She was the spark plug in our family, that's how I looked at her. She kept things alive and going.

BARBARA (V/O) John and Patsy Ramsey had moved to Boulder five years earlier from Atlanta, with JonBenet and her older brother, Burke. The scars of two family crises seemed to be healing: Patsy's near-fatal bout with ovarian cancer, and the death of Beth Ramsey in an auto accident. She was the oldest of John Ramsey's three children from a previous marriage. John's software business was thriving, and to all appearances — so was the family. Until that tragic Christmas Day in 1996. John and Patsy Ramsey returned home with JonBenet and her nine year-old brother Burke, after spending the evening with friends. They got back about nine o'clock. Everything seemed normal.

JOHN RAMSEY We came home, went to bed. JonBenet was asleep when we arrived home. We took her to bed. And, uh, got Burke to bed. And went to uh...went to sleep.

BARBARA WALTERS You took a Melatonin pill.

JOHN RAMSEY Um hum.

BARBARA WALTERS So you slept soundly?

JOHN RAMSEY Unfortunately, I did.

BARBARA (V/O) There was a family vacation planned the next day. Patsy Ramsey says she got up early to get ready, threw on the clothes she'd worn the night before, and started downstairs from her third-floor bedroom at about 5:30 a.m.

PATSY RAMSEY And as I came to the bottom of the stairs there were three pages neatly laid across one of the rungs of the stairway. I turned around to start to see what it was and realized after I'd read the first couple of lines...

BARBARA WALTERS It was a ransom note.

PATSY RAMSEY Yes it was.

BARBARA WALTERS That said...

PATSY RAMSEY I believe it said 'listen carefully.' Something like, 'We have your daughter.' And I just dashed back up those stairs as fast as I could and pushed her door open and she wasn't in her bed.

BARBARA WALTERS And then?

PATSY RAMSEY Then I just screamed for John. Screamed.

JOHN RAMSEY I knew from Patsy's tone of voice that something was very wrong. And I rushed downstairs and she told me there was a note and I read it. [OVERLAP]

PATSY RAMSEY It was just so unbelievable. You just can't&you can't&

JOHN RAMSEY It's hard to grasp.

BARBARA (V/O) The note said, 'We have your daughter in our possession.' It demanded 118-thousand dollars in ransom, threatened that JonBenet would be beheaded, and warned the Ramseys that they were being watched.

BARBARA WALTERS The note said if you do anything-if police come, if FBI come-your daughter will die. You called 9-1-1.

JOHN RAMSEY Yes I did.(PAUSE) It would have been impossible to sit there and wait by ourselves.

BARBARA WALTERS You also called friends to come over. Was that wise?

JOHN RAMSEY Your daughter is gone...

PATSY RAMSEY [OVERLAP] We were desperate&desperate.

JOHN RAMSEY She's in the hands of a madman, and, and you reach out for any help you can get. Um. (PAUSE) If I have a regret it's I didn't get more help...that morning.

BARBARA WALTERS The police searched your house but they didn't find JonBenet. But at one point you went downstairs and found an open window.

JOHN RAMSEY Yes.

BARBARA WALTERS A window that you had broken yourself at one point to put your hand through and find the latch.

JOHN RAMSEY Right.

BARBARA (V/O) That window was in a storage room at the rear of the house. It was on the other end of the basement from the room in which JonBenet's body would later be found.

BARBARA WALTERS What did you think when you saw this open window?

JOHN RAMSEY I was a bit alarmed, but I was more alarmed with the Samsonite suitcase that was standing up below the window.

BARBARA WALTERS I have seen the actual police photograph that was taken of that window and the suitcase and, and, there it was in full sight.

JOHN RAMSEY That looked wrong. That suitcase did not belong there.

PATSY RAMSEY It was out of place.

JOHN RAMSEY It was out of place.

BARBARA WALTERS So you thought perhaps...

JOHN RAMSEY [OVERLAP] It was....

BARBARA WALTERS [OVERLAP]... the kidnapper had gone through that window.

JOHN RAMSEY I... that was my first impression, yes.

BARBARA WALTERS Seven hours after the police first arrived-it was now around 1:00p.m.-the police asked you and a friend to search the whole house again. At that point you opened the door to the small room.(PAUSE) Tell me about it.

JOHN RAMSEY I knew instantly, instantly what I'd found. I'd found my daughter and...

BARBARA WALTERS What did you see?

JOHN RAMSEY I saw her lying on the floor with a white blanket-she was lying on a white blanket. Uh, her hands were tied above her head. She had tape over her mouth. Her eyes were closed. (SIGHS) I...immediately knelt down over her, felt her cheek, took the tape off-immediately off her mouth. I tried to untie the... the uh, the cord that was around her arms. And I couldn't get the knot untied. Umm... she was cool...

BARBARA WALTERS [OVERLAP] You felt she was dead. Did you scream?

JOHN RAMSEY I screamed. I picked her up and I ran upstairs and I... it was like a dream... when you... you scream but you can't say anything. All you can do is scream. That's what I did.

BARBARA WALTERS You put... yes?

JOHN RAMSEY [OVERLAP] I took her upstairs and, and laid her on the floor, and uh, still had a hope that she was alive.

PATSY RAMSEY I remember walking in and seeing her lying there in front of the Christmas tree. And I looked at John and he said, 'She's dead.'(PAUSE) And it's...nothing felt real. I felt like it was um&my life was in slow motion and this was not really happening. I knelt down over her and just laid my body on her body and my cheek against her cheek and it was cold. And I just kept saying, 'No no.' You know, ask God... ask God to... raise her. (CRYING)

BARBARA V/O: JonBenet's body was stiff — she had apparently been dead for hours. An intricate noose apparatus — called a garrote — was tightly pulled around her neck, cutting into the flesh. She had been strangled to death. An autopsy would later reveal JonBenet had also suffered a skull fracture-the result of a blow to the head, and had been sexually molested. What had begun as a kidnapping case for the police was now a brutal homicide.

BARBARA WALTERS The police stay with you all that day and the following day. You felt that you were under their protection.

JOHN RAMSEY Yes.

BARBARA WALTERS 'Cause you didn't know where this killer might have been. Um, but it turns out that they were really scrutinizing the two of you-that you were already suspects. Did you have any idea then that you were suspects?

JOHN RAMSEY No.

PATSY RAMSEY No.

BARBARA WALTERS None?

JOHN RAMSEY No. Not at all.

BARBARA WALTERS It was reported also Mr. Ramsey that shortly after you found your daughter's body, that you called the pilot of your plane to arrange a flight to Atlanta. Is that true?

JOHN RAMSEY I did. We had um... been asked to leave the house. Within minutes of that happening the police took the house over. We had no where to go. Atlanta was our home. Uh, we lived in Atlanta for 25 years. That's where our family was. We wanted to go home.

BARBARA WALTERS During the day that your child was found and in the days following, Mr. Ramsey, there were reports from the police that you didn't seem distraught and you weren't sobbing. You seemed stoic. It was said you two rarely talked to each other. To them this made it look as if you were guilty.

JOHN RAMSEY (PAUSE) I've heard that. And I find that, uh... unbelievable. Uh... I've lost two children and for some one to tell me that I didn't act right, uh, I don't accept.

BARBARA WALTERS There is the impression that from Day 1 the two of you refused to cooperate with the police.

JOHN RAMSEY No. That, that is a... a media myth. Uh. (PAUSE) We met with the Police on the 26th. We met...

BARBARA WALTERS [OVERLAP] And talked with them?

JOHN RAMSEY And talked with them. Talked with them for hours on the 27th. When they asked us to come to the Police Station. We said you know yeah we want to keep working with ya but can't you come here? We can't go out. Patsy was in bed. Patsy was... barely able to move. And all we asked was they come, come here. They said well no, we have paper work at the police station we might need to get hold of

BARBARA WALTERS OK. On the 27th a very good friend of yours Mike Bynam said to you I think that you should hire lawyers.

JOHN RAMSEY Mike...knew things that were going on that we didn't know. He... he knew that the police by that time were withholding JonBenet's body for burial. He also, based on his experience as a prosecutor and as a district attorney could see that the police were very quickly focusing on us as the killers.

BARBARA WALTERS Your lawyers advised you then not to submit to police questions. Why not, people say, wouldn't you have wanted to tell them everything?

JOHN RAMSEY Well I don't recall that our lawyers told us at the time. Uh... we were perfectly willing and anxious to work with the police to find the killer. We had a higher priority at that point, and that was to bury our daughter.

BARBARA (V/O) But it would, in fact, be four months before the Ramseys would sit down with detectives for formal interrogation. There was a mutual distrust between the Boulder Police Department and the Ramsey family.

BARBARA WALTERS Why didn't you take a lie detector test?

PATSY RAMSEY No one ever asked us...

BARBARA WALTERS Really?

PATSY RAMSEY ... to take a lie detector test.

BARBARA WALTERS Police never asked you to take a lie detector test?

JOHN RAMSEY No.

PATSY RAMSEY No.

JOHN RAMSEY I was asked, during my interview with Steve Thomas, a hypothetical question—

BARBARA WALTERS One of the policemen.

JOHN RAMSEY One of the policemen that investigated this murder. He said, if I were to ask you to take a lie-detector test, what would you say. And I said I would be offended. That's what I

would say. I wasn't interested in proving my innocence at that point. That...that [OVERLAP] was... a non-issue.

PATSY RAMSEY We were frightened... there was a murderer loose.

BARBARA WALTERS Mr. Ramsey, would you now take a lie-detector test—

JOHN RAMSEY I would, certainly.

BARBARA WALTERS Would you, Mrs. Ramsey?

PATSY RAMSEY Yes, I would take a lie-detector test.

BARBARA WALTERS When you realize that you two were the prime suspects, what did you think, what did you feel, what did you say?

JOHN RAMSEY Well we were... we were outraged, we were... we were shocked. How could they think that?

BARBARA WALTERS Mr. Ramsey, the police officer that day, Linda Arndt, said on this very program that when you put your daughter's body down, you looked straight into her eyes.

LINDA ARNDT SOT: His face was just inches from mine.

BARBARA WALTERS And Linda Arndt said she felt then from your expression that the killer was in the house, and she was afraid of you.

JOHN RAMSEY Well the question I would ask Linda Arndt. Has has she ever looked before in the eyes of a father who has just been told his 6-year old daughter is dead? Lying there on the floor in front of him? I don't know what I looked like. I'm sure I was in agony. I'm sure I went into shock. Uh. (PAUSE) Linda Arndt's ability to look in someone's eyes and determine they were a killer is a remarkable talent.

PATSY RAMSEY You just can't believe it. I mean you...we're...we're suffering from having lost our child And then for someone to accuse you, it's just...you can't believe that that would happen.

BARBARA WALTERS Why did they accuse you?

JOHN RAMSEY I think the police looked at the situation and didn't apply a lot of logic to it. And said child murdered in the home, the book says the parents always did it. And that became the conclusion. The tragedy of the Police investigation was that it ended on December 26th.

BARBARA WALTERS The big question... Why did police suspect the Ramseys? Did Patsy Ramsey snap that night and strike out at her daughter? Or did John Ramsey sexually abuse his little girl as some think? When we come back... The possible motives for murder.

BARBARA WALTERS

When I first told friends that I was going to interview John and Patsy Ramsey, the reaction was... They're guilty. Although neither of the Ramseys has been formally charged with this crime, it seems much of the public opinion has already convicted them.

BARBARA WALTERS Do you understand why it is that so many people still think you are guilty?

JOHN RAMSEY I understand that they've been told that by the media for 3 long years. I'm amazed that the whole world doesn't think we're guilty... based on what they've been told.

BARBARA WALTERS Let me go through some of the major reasons why people feel you are guilty. The beauty pageants. If we had only seen pictures of JonBenet in in little jeans and a T-shirt... there might not have been the same feeling. But what we saw in still photograph's and in videos was a child dressed like an adult. Very suggestive in many of these pictures. Lipstick, mascara. Moving around on the stage in these beauty pageants. To many people this looks... perverted. Therefore, there's got to be something wrong here.

PATSY RAMSEY There is something wrong here if someone thinks that looks perverted. JonBenet was an entertainer. She would entertain [LAUGHTER] at the drop of a hat. Little girls dress up and play dress up.

BARBARA WALTERS You yourself had entered beauty contests.

PATSY RAMSEY Yes.

PATSY RAMSEY SOT I'm a junior at West Virginia University!

BARBARA WALTERS So this was, what? Fun for you both to have her do this?

PATSY RAMSEY It was the most wonderful time of my life. It's not unlike a father who enjoyed playing baseball as a child. He wants to impart that same love of the game with his his son or daughter. And there's just absolutely nothing wrong with it.

BARBARA WALTERS They called JonBenet a a six year old Lolita, a pint sized sex kitten.

PATSY RAMSEY The people that that look at these things and see something... perverted. That didn't come from JonBenet. That's coming from the viewer not the child.

BARBARA WALTERS So let me go through what the motives are. Motive #1: You are guilty Mr. Ramsey because there was some evidence that your daughter had been sexually molested.

JOHN RAMSEY I... know as best I can know as a father who was with his daughter... every day that I was home. She was not sexually abused or molested before December 26th.

BARBARA WALTERS OK. But. On December 26th there are some indications that your daughter was sexually molested. [OVERLAP]

JOHN RAMSEY [OVERLAP] Well that's...

BARBARA WALTERS [OVERLAP] Therefore here's the motive um. You were doing it. Maybe you'd done it before. Maybe you just did it that night. Um. Perhaps your wife discovered you. Whatever it was, JonBenet cried out... you killed her.

JOHN RAMSEY (PAUSE) Well that's... (PAUSE) fits right in the category of it could have been done by an alien as well. It makes no sense. There is no history. A person doesn't go throughout their lives as a normal human being. One night turn into a monster. Slaughter their daughter. Go to bed and get up and act normal from there on. That doesn't happen. In these kinds of cases, virtually all of 'em I suspect, where there is child abuse in a family there's a long history. And that's not the case in our family.

BARBARA WALTERS I have to point out that JonBenet's pediatrician who had been her pediatrician from birth has publicly said that he never saw any... um evidence of sexual molestation. There have never been reports from her school. And yet there is the suspicion.

JOHN RAMSEY I would have given my life for JonBenet in an instant. I'm sorry that I couldn't have done it that night. Uh to be accused of harming my child in any way is... is beyond comprehension.

BARBARA WALTERS This is a very brutal murder, and yet some of the authorities have said that you staged this. Um, that you loosely tied your daughter's hands. That you put the noose, the garrote, to make it look as if some terrible person had done this. That this whole... picture was staged.

JOHN RAMSEY Well, that's absurd. This was done by a terrible person. The garrote...was deeply embedded in JonBenet's throat. Her hands were tightly bound, I couldn't get the knot untied, I tried to get it untied, even before I brought her upstairs, The fundamental issue is no logic has been applied to any of this case. Why would I for example have staged this horrible scene, and then disturbed it myself, pulled the tape off her mouth, carried her upstairs, tried to untie the hands before I brought her upstairs. If I'd have staged it, I would've wanted the police to see it as I staged it. It's not logical. Makes no sense.

BARBARA WALTERS Let me give the motive that is ascribed to you, Mrs. Ramsey.

PATSY RAMSEY OK.

BARBARA WALTERS Was bed wetting a source of tension in your house?

PATSY RAMSEY Absolutely not. All children have accidents.

BARBARA WALTERS The motive is that uh uh JonBenet wet her bed and that you got angry. You lost it. You snapped and you killed her perhaps accidentally. You were downstairs. Maybe she came down. She said mommy I wet my bed. You said again JonBenet! And you either pushed her or you hit her. Uh you were exhausted. You were furious. (PAUSE) You did it.

PATSY RAMSEY First of all we know from the evidence that this was a premeditated murder. The way in which she... died. The garrote that was around her neck.

BARBARA WALTERS The noose.

PATSY RAMSEY The... tape...

BARBARA WALTERS You could have done it. You could have gotten nervous.

PATSY RAMSEY [OVERLAP] No. No.

BARBARA WALTERS [OVERLAP] And afterwards you could have done it. You could have awakened your husband and said I did this terrible thing John.

JOHN RAMSEY [OVERLAP] But. But but Barbara.

PATSY RAMSEY [OVERLAP] No. No.

BARBARA WALTERS [OVERLAP] And now we have to stage this. You know people have said this.

PATSY RAMSEY Of course they've said it.

JOHN RAMSEY But would you... you have a child. Would you... get up in the middle of the night and slaughter your child? We're parents. We love our children. No...

BARBARA WALTERS But what do you say when people say you just snapped. I mean. You know whatever it was. (SNAPS FINGERS) Something went wrong. You did this terrible thing. John then helped you. You staged this whole thing. You know.

JOHN RAMSEY It's nonsense.

BARBARA WALTERS Maybe you don't even know that you did it.

PATSY RAMSEY That's impossible.

JOHN RAMSEY It's...

PATSY RAMSEY It's just... it's absurd.

BARBARA WALTERS I'm asking the questions you know that people...

PATSY RAMSEY [OVERLAP] I know.

BARBARA WALTERS ... that people have said. These are the two major motives. Either you sexually molested her or you snapped (SNAPS FINGERS) because primarily she was bed wetting.

PATSY RAMSEY [OVERLAP] Let me tell you something. I am a cancer survivor of Stage 4 cancer. John has lost a child in an automobile accident. That completely changes your outlook When you are standing on the brink of death with a terminal illness your priorities suddenly line up... in a row. And you know exactly what the important things are in life. And bed wetting is totally insignificant. I love my children. I wouldn't... harm them for anything in the world. Now I don't know how you answer someone that continually... accuses you of some... absurd notion.

BARBARA WALTERS Did either of you for a moment suspect... each other?

JOHN RAMSEY No.

PATSY RAMSEY Not for a minute.

JOHN RAMSEY Absolutely not for a microsecond.

PATSY RAMSEY Tom Haney, who is the detective, homicide detective from Denver, asked me that very question in my three-day interrogation. After three days of listening to him hammer me, I said, don't even go there. If I thought for one moment that JonBenet Ramsey was murdered by her father, we wouldn't be having this interview right now.

BARBARA V/O: Three other family suspects were cleared by the police investigation. Nine-year-old Burke Ramsey did not have the strength-police believe-the murder required, or the ability to write the ransom note. John Ramsey's older son and daughter were not in Colorado that night. The police continued to focus on the parents.

BARBARA WALTERS Another major factor. The ransom note. The ransom note was written on a pad and a pen from your home.

PATSY RAMSEY um hum.

BARBARA WALTERS And... the question is, if the intruder was planning to write a note why wouldn't he or she have brought their own pad and paper? (PAUSE)

JOHN RAMSEY They knew that the less they brought in the house the better.

BARBARA WALTERS But they planned to write a note? (PAUSE)

JOHN RAMSEY Apparently.

BARBARA WALTERS Before or after the crime?

PATSY RAMSEY I think...

JOHN RAMSEY [OVERLAP] I think the note was written before... the crime was committed.

BARBARA WALTERS What has thrown great suspicion on you Mrs. Ramsey as you know is that some handwriting experts have said that there's a similarity between the writing on this note and your handwriting. This has been inconclusive. But the similarity of the handwriting is the strongest piece of evidence implicating you. (PAUSE)

PATSY RAMSEY Well if that's the strongest then there's not much of a case. Because we have had handwriting experts to look at my handwriting as well. And on a scale, I believe, of 1 to 5 with 5 being a totally incomplete match, I was rated at a 4.5. so they were... there's very little.

BARBARA (V/O) In fact, law enforcement sources in Boulder, Colorado told me that media reports of similarities between Mrs. Ramsey's handwriting and the ransom note are quote "grossly exaggerated."

BARBARA WALTERS One of the questions is, what reason would a kidnapper have for leaving behind both the ransom letter and the body.

JOHN RAMSEY (PAUSE) I hope to ask the killer that someday face-to-face. We believe that this was a kidnapping originally... that went bad. (PAUSE) Now this person, this creature, his mind doesn't work like ours. It's it's boiling. So whatever was going through this creature's mind we can't logically analyze and explain.

BARBARA WALTERS Another um indicator of your possible guilt to the Police and the FBI is time. Said that only you two had the time and the opportunity to commit the murder. Use the noose. This garrote. Carry the child downstairs. Write a two and a half page ransom note without the fear of being detected. If it were an intruder, this intruder would be afraid that you would wake up. That Burke would wake up.

JOHN RAMSEY But...

BARBARA WALTERS And yet all this time. This takes time.

JOHN RAMSEY We believe that this killer came into our home while we were gone. Waited. Was there when we returned.

BARBARA WALTERS Waited hours.

JOHN RAMSEY Waited hours.

PATSY RAMSEY Um hum.

JOHN RAMSEY Had plenty of time to write a ransom note.

BARBARA WALTERS When you were asleep.

JOHN RAMSEY When we were asleep or perhaps before we even came home.

PATSY RAMSEY We would have been gone from 3 to 4 hours... that is plenty... ample time...
[OVERLAP]

JOHN RAMSEY [OVERLAP] You know I I...

PATSY RAMSEY [OVERLAP]... to find their way and learn their way around the house.

BARBARA WALTERS And be in the house when you return?

PATSY RAMSEY Yes.

BARBARA WALTERS Does it sound possible that a killer would sit for hours and hours in your house [OVERLAP]

PATSY RAMSEY [OVERLAP] That house is so rambling. There are so many hiding places. He could be hidden for a week and we wouldn't find him.

BARBARA V/O: The intruder theory is the major point of debate in the Ramsey case. One of the mysteries cited in newspaper stories was a lack of footprints outside the house... there was snow, but no footprints in the snow, the stories said, therefore... no intruder. But these actual police crime scene photographs, taken early that morning, before JonBenet's body was discovered, show only scattered patches of snow around the house — and clear paths to windows and doors. But mysteries abound in this case.

BARBARA WALTERS When Jon Benet's body was found there was one of her favorite nightgown's next to her. Her so-called Barbie nightgown.

PATSY RAMSEY Um hum.

BARBARA WALTERS And so there was the impression that whoever did this cared about this child. Left the nightgown. Left the blanket.

PATSY RAMSEY Um hum.

BARBARA WALTERS Again. Oh her parents did it but they, they loved her so they tried to comfort her even in death.

JOHN RAMSEY That's a very strange... that nightgown should not have been there. It's it's a clue of some type. We don't know what. Look, we know several very positive facts about this killer we believe. It's a male. (PAUSE) It's a pedophile that looks at young... female children much differently than you and I do. They look at 'em with sexual uh eyes. I thought about it

every day for 3 years. I've talked to experts. I've talked to experienced homicide detectives.
(LONG PAUSE) It's the best profile we can come up with.

BARBARA WALTERS So, could there have been an intruder? Coming up, a mysterious shoe print, a palm print, DNA material — and we'll show you the curious marks on the little girl's body — evidence that raised intriguing questions about who killed JonBenet. If not the Ramseys... then who?

BARBARA WALTERS, ABCNEWS

In 1998, the top two detectives on the Ramsey case quit in protest. Police detective Steve Thomas said he left because he felt the Ramseys should have been arrested. The chief investigator for the DA's office resigned because he felt the investigation unfairly focused on the parents. His name is Lou Smith.

BARBARA WALTERS (V/O) Lou Smit is probably the most experienced homicide detective in Colorado. He was brought into the Ramsey case by the District Attorney after the DA's office lost confidence in the Boulder Police Department. Smit developed his own theory of the case that widened the gap with the police department: he became convinced that a stun gun, like this one, was used on JonBenet. A stun gun delivers an electric shock that incapacitates the victim. Smit noticed marks, reproduced in this sketch, on the autopsy photographs of JonBenet's body. The autopsy report referred to them simply as "abrasions," but they reminded Smit of a previous stun gun case. There were two sets of marks on JonBenet's body, and when Smit calibrated their measurements, he felt they matched up with this popular stun gun model, the Air Taser.

BARBARA WALTERS He felt the Stun gun was used and that's what kept JonBenet quiet. But there is no proof of that.

JOHN RAMSEY Well I have not heard any expert disagree with that theory first of all.

BARBARA WALTERS [OVERLAP] Well some of, some of the Police do not think there was a Stun gun.

JOHN RAMSEY Well I don't consider the Boulder Police experts in homicides. That's one of the problems we've been dealing with.

PATSY RAMSEY The Police don't like that theory because it doesn't match up with the parents did it. If the parents wanted to bring their child to a basement quietly they wouldn't have to use a Stun gun. They would just say, come on, we're gonna go to the basement... for a surprise or something. You know that doesn't fit their theory that John or I were involved.

BARBARA WALTERS Why wasn't the body exhumed?

JOHN RAMSEY (PAUSE) Don't know why the Police didn't consider that. Uh we were asked... when this theory first surfaced about a Stun gun that if the body were exhumed... it could be

proved conclusively but it had to be done fairly quickly. This was... within months of when we'd just buried JonBenet. And I, as her father, could not bring myself to do that. I had laid my child to rest. She was at peace. And that was a that decision I couldn't make.

BARBARA WALTERS Even though it might have cleared you?

JOHN RAMSEY It wasn't... that was not the priority. The priority was my child was at rest.

BARBARA WALTERS Let me talk about some of the evidence that um some people may not know about. Uh DNA was found under JonBenet's fingernail's and also on her panties.

JOHN RAMSEY Um hum.

BARBARA WALTERS This DNA does not match yours, your son's any member of your family or indeed anyone whom the Police have questioned.

JOHN RAMSEY That's correct.

BARBARA WALTERS And there was a palm print on the door of that room in which JonBenet was found. That print matches no one that any one has tested and there is a visible shoe print with the name "High Tec" clearly visible in the room in which your daughter's body was found. The Police have not been able to match this print, this shoe, this DNA to anyone.

JOHN RAMSEY That's correct.

PATSY RAMSEY Exactly.

JOHN RAMSEY And that's... that's what gives us hope that we can find the killer.

BARBARA WALTERS You think that's what shows that you're innocent?

JOHN RAMSEY I think that will lead us to the killer. I don't... accept that as... proof that we're innocent. Our our objective is to find the killer. That's the only way we will prove our innocence. Sadly.

BARBARA WALTERS Do you think the murderer is some one you know?

JOHN RAMSEY I don't know that I knew this person or not. I... hope I don't.

PATSY RAMSEY I can't believe that we have ever knowingly met any one that can be this vicious. But some one killed our daughter. So we have to start looking. We start at the inner circle and keep moving out.

BARBARA WALTERS (V/O) The Ramseys start with the "inner circle" because they say the murderer was familiar with their family — perhaps even to the point of knowing that John Ramsey's year-end bonus was 118-thousand dollars — the amount demanded in the ransom note.

In their book, the Ramseys suggest that the police look harder at a handful of suspects who had dealings with the family. But high-ranking law enforcement authorities in Boulder tell me that all of the people on the Ramsey's list have been, quote, "thoroughly investigated and are not currently under suspicion," unquote.

BARBARA WALTERS If the murderer was a pedophile... a sexual predator. Do you ever reproach yourself for letting JonBenet appear so publicly in pageants and parades where she could have been seen?

PATSY RAMSEY Well, I think that is probably... one thing that I... if I had to do over again would be much more cautious about.

JOHN RAMSEY There there's no question we were naive. We were... we were ignorant of the fact there are evil people in the world.

BARBARA WALTERS (V/O) The Ramseys lost their naivete and their privacy overnight. Reporters clamored for comment and the fact that there was no comment didn't stop the tabloids. The supermarket press hounded them to the point of libel, they said, infiltrating their neighborhood, their church, even their cemetery.

JOHN RAMSEY (PAUSE) We've been under siege for... almost 3 years. Hidden cameras were planted at the gravesite. Hidden video cameras. Um. (PAUSE) People would call on us under false pretense and say they were some one they weren't.

BARBARA WALTERS How did you get through all this? The reports. The constant television?

PATSY RAMSEY Barbara I have lost the most precious thing in the world to me. I lost my child. My little girl JonBenet. I have been as low as you humanly can go. You can kick me when I'm down but you can't take me any lower. Cause I'm hurt as badly as I can be hurt.

BARBARA WALTERS Do you dream about JonBenet?

PATSY RAMSEY Yes I do.

BARBARA WALTERS What do you dream?

PATSY RAMSEY I dream... there's... my dreams are so vivid that I feel like I've spent the whole night with her. And when I wake up in the morning... then I realize... that... the day is the nightmare. Because I've had such a wonderful, lovely time with JonBenet all night long.

BARBARA WALTERS What has this done to your marriage?

JOHN RAMSEY (PAUSE) I think it's strengthened our love. Uh. For each other.

PATSY RAMSEY I can't imagine... what I would do without John to lean on.

BARBARA WALTERS Did either of you ever considered suicide?

JOHN RAMSEY I have to admit that yes I did.

BARBARA WALTERS You did too?

PATSY RAMSEY Yes. But we have other children. They need us now more than ever. So we have to be strong for them. That's the only reason... that we have to go on.

BARBARA WALTERS You were carrying something when you came in here

PATSY RAMSEY Just a little... little glove.

BARBARA WALTERS And you did not ask to show this I have to point out. I saw you walking in carrying something. This is a glove that was JonBenet's?

PATSY RAMSEY Yes. Um hum.

BARBARA WALTERS Do you carry this all the time?

PATSY RAMSEY Um. I usually have something of her's with me all the time. I uh found this just recently when I had opened some boxes for the first time that I hadn't seen since we left Colorado. And um. You know to think that her little hand was ... was in this... (EMOTIONAL) glove and there's a little spot here where she obviously spilled something. And um. It makes me sad that that um (EMOTIONAL) you know there were happy little hands in this glove. Now they're gone.

JOHN RAMSEY Ok sweetie. It's okay. It's okay JonBenet's OK. She's with us.

BARBARA WALTERS Grieving parents... Still under suspicion. In 1998, a grand jury began to consider all the evidence. During those months... John and Patsy Ramsey swore their innocence but prepared for the worst.

BARBARA WALTERS, ABCNEWS

Two years after the murder of their daughter, JonBenet, John and Patsy Ramsey were still the chief suspects. Finally, a grand jury was convened to decide whether they should be indicted... face trial for the unthinkable crime. The Ramseys waited, month after month — Their future in the hands of strangers.

BARBARA WALTERS (V/O) For more than a year, a Boulder grand jury heard testimony and considered evidence in the murder of JonBenet Ramsey. Its term and budget were extended to allow for more investigation. The Ramseys were holding their breath.

BARBARA WALTERS Did you think that you were going to be indicted?

JOHN RAMSEY We certainly hoped not, but we were fully prepared mentally to be indicted, and to face a trial. We had no fear of a trial. We knew what the outcome would be.

PATSY RAMSEY You know, we are innocent. So we have no fear, because we know the truth.

BARBARA WALTERS But did you say... Patsy, we may very well be indicted? You've got to face this?

JOHN RAMSEY Oh yes.

PATSY RAMSEY Yes.

JOHN RAMSEY We were prepared to drive to the sheriff's office, turn ourselves in, and be jailed. Burke was with friends, I had signed a, uh, custodial agreement that would put Burke in the, in the custody of my brother.

PATSY RAMSEY We had to prepare in the event the worst happened.

BARBARA WALTERS (V/O) The worst did not happen. On October 13, 1999, the grand jury finished its work, and the District Attorney announced that there was insufficient evidence to indict anyone in the murder of JonBenet.

BARBARA WALTERS Even after the grand jury did not indict you, many still question your innocence. Let me show you a piece of tape, Mr. and Mrs. Ramsey, this is the Colorado governor, Bill Owens, October 27th, 1999, after the grand jury issued no indictment. [PAUSE]

GOVERNOR BILL OWENS (on tape) If I could speak to John and Patsy Ramsey I'd tell them to quit hiding behind their attorneys, quit hiding behind their PR firm, come back to Colorado, work with us to find the killers in this case, no matter where that trail may lead.

BARBARA WALTERS What do you say to the governor?

JOHN RAMSEY Governor Owens did what, to us, what should happen to no one in a civilized society. As the chief of his state...he held up his finger, tested the political winds... discarded 13 months of grand jury work, and for political gain... said, oh, don't worry, we're gonna get 'em. I would say to Governor Owens, I asked to meet with you before the grand jury was over, I asked to meet with you after the grand jury was over, You spent three years investigating my family. What are you going to do to find the killer of my daughter?

PATSY RAMSEY The Boulder police would like this to go away. They would like to just close the books on it, pretend that none of it ever happened. But we are not going away. We are going to be their worst nightmare. Patsy and John Ramsey are hanging in there, until the day we die we'll be looking for the person that murdered our daughter.

BARBARA WALTERS Mr. and Mrs. Ramsey, again and again in your book, you talk about your faith in God.

PATSY RAMSEY If it weren't for our faith, there would be no hope of ever seeing JonBenet again. But we know that we will see her again in heaven.

BARBARA WALTERS You think that JonBenet is in a better place?

PATSY RAMSEY I would've liked to think that my arms were the best place for JonBenet to be. But she's in a place where I hope to be one day. I know I'll be there.

BARBARA WALTERS, ABCNEWS

As wide-ranging as this interview was, we obviously weren't able to cover every aspect of the case. The Ramseys themselves go into greater detail in their book, *The Death of Innocence*. If you have further questions, you may find answers on our Web site at ABCNEWS.COM... or you can actually question the Ramseys yourself because they'll be available online this coming monday at 10 p.m. ET, again at ABCNEWS.com. As to the status of the case? Boulder police and the District Attorney say the investigation continues but primarily part-time... And they say the Ramseys are still, and I quote, under the "umbrella of suspicion." In the meantime, John and Patsy Ramsey continue to fund their own investigation. They say they won't consider the case closed until the killer is found.