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ANDERSON COOPER 360 DEGREES

What's Known about Alleged Ramsey Murderer?; Could Killer's Confession Be False?

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TOM FOREMAN, CNN CORRESPONDENT:

Thanks, Ted. With word of a confession circling the globe, we are outside the house where JonBenet Ramsey lived and died. And these walls cannot talk, so they can't tell us if this confession is real and tonight there are growing reasons to wonder if it is.

ANNOUNCER: He says he loved her. He says her death was an accident. So why is John Karr's admission raising so many questions tonight?

Pieces of a troubling past, child porn allegations, red flags from his ex-wife, so why is she saying he couldn't have possibly done it?

And why leave a ransom note with the body in the house? And no signs of forced entry? And a brutal murder that woke no one up? Plenty of questions. Does John Karr have the answers?

This is the special edition of ANDERSON COOPER 360, "JonBenet, True Confession?" In for Anderson tonight, Tom Foreman in Boulder, Colorado and Rick Sanchez in New York.

RICK SANCHEZ, CNN CORRESPONDENT: And good evening from New York. Here and around the country people woke up thinking that perhaps one of the saddest and longest running cold cases in recent memory might finally be solved. Tom, that may not necessarily be the case, is it?

FOREMAN: Solved, Rick, is not the word here tonight. There was euphoria this morning but all day long, people have been listening to the story, told by this man in Bangkok and saying this doesn't add up. And that doesn't add up and neither does this. What is that all about?

We have been looking at this day of growing confusion over this supposed confession and we're going to look at all of the developments in it. There are many, many surprises. You'll want to stick with us. But first, let's start off with Stan Grant in Thailand, where it all began.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

STAN GRANT, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): At the center of a chaotic media pack flanked by police and security officials, John Mark Karr looked bewildered and then amid a chorus of frantic yelled question he made this eerie statement.

JOHN MARK KARR, SUSPECT: I love JonBenet. And she died accidentally.

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QUESTION: Are you an innocent man? Are you an innocent man?

KARR: No.

GRANT: After that, in a low voice, face impassive, Karr responded to other questions about the night JonBenet Ramsey died.

QUESTION: What happened?

KARR: Her death was an accident.

QUESTION: So you were in the basement?

KARR: Yes.

QUESTION: Can you tell us about your connection to the Ramsey family?

KARR: No comment on that.

QUESTION: How did you get into the basement to play with her?

KARR: No comment on that.

GRANT: Officials say Karr had been tracked for the past two months and finally arrested in the apartment in Bangkok where he lived alone.

ANN HURST, U.S. ICE: He's been charged by the State of California -- I'm sorry, Colorado, for first degree murder after deliberation, first degree murder, felony murder, first degree kidnapping, second degree kidnapping and sexual assault on a child.

GRANT: But arrest warrant for Karr has been sealed and district attorney in Colorado says no charges have actually been filed yet. Thai police described Karr as quote, "nervous," they say Karr told them the say thing he repeated to reporters, that JonBenet's killing was not intended. A distinction measured in murder cases by degrees.

GEN. SUWAT THAMRONGSISKUL: Second degree, not intentionally.

GRANT: Why Bangkok, why now? Karr had just started work as a teacher here, two law enforcement sources told CNN that Karr was under investigation by Thai police for an unrelated sex crime that led authorities to his door.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

GRANT (on camera): Now Mark Karr sits in a cell here behind me at the police station in Bangkok. His passport, his visa has been revoked, he's been described, quote, as an "undesirable person," who will be forced to leave the country and hope to return him to the United States and hand him over to U.S. authorities as soon as possible. Tom?

FOREMAN: Thank you so much, Stan Grant in Thailand. This is just the beginning of an amazing odyssey today. Bear in mind, we don't know specifically what this man said. We know what Thai authorities said that he said to them.

We also don't know much about his past but a clearer picture was coming in today. David Mattingly has more on that.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

KARR: I love JonBenet and she died accidentally.

DAVID MATTINGLY, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Before causing a sensation in the grasp of Thai authorities John Mark Karr was a father, a husband and a teacher with roots almost a world away in northwest Alabama.

BRAVEL JACKSON, MARION COUNTY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT: John was a likable student, outgoing, intelligent. Couldn't help but like John. He had something going all of the time.

MATTINGLY: Marion County school superintendent Bravel Jackson remembers a boy raised by his grandparent in the small town of Hamilton, who graduated and attended college. In 1984 when Karr was 19, according to the associated press, he married a 13-year-old local girl. The marriage was annulled the following year after the bride said she feared for her life and safety. In 1989, Karr married a second time this time to a 16-year-old in Georgia. And in 1996, the year JonBenet was murdered, Karr came home as a substitute teacher in elementary school. But almost immediately there were problems.

JACKSON: Complaints from parents that -- rumors that were going on in the community and. I could not find any legal ramifications as far as any arrest had been made at that time, of local authorities, but we felt like it was in our best interest that he not be allowed to substitute in our schools.

MATTINGLY: Karr was let go after three months, two years later he lost another substituting job at another nearby school system after more undisclosed complaints. In divorce papers filed 2001 his second wife Laura said her now ex-husband had been told that he was "too affectionate with the children."

QUESTION: So you were in the basement?

KARR: Yes.

MATTINGLY: But in spite of what he says, Karr's ex-wife Laura told San Francisco television station KGO her ex-husband couldn't have killed JonBenet Ramsey because he was with her the entire Christmas season of 1996. According to school officials, Karr was substituting in Franklin County, Alabama, working up to December 18, a week before JonBenet was killed in her Colorado home and he returned to work when classes started in January.

But Laura Karr also said John Mark Karr was fascinated with the JonBenet murder, researching it extensively according to KGO and was also reportedly interested in the murder of 12-year-old Polly Klaas in Petaluma, California. Karr moved his family there in 2000. He lost another teaching job in 2001 after being charged with possessing child pornography. He pleaded not guilty.

QUESTION: How long had you known JonBenet?

KARR: No comment on that.

MATTINGLY: By the time John Mark Karr was making his stunning public statements, authorities say he had traveled extensively, on the run from the California charges for five years.

A resume posted to an online service for teachers paints Karr as a globe-trotting educator, it cannot but if fully verified but claims Karr recently taught young children in Honduras, Costa Rica, Germany, the Netherlands and South Korea before starting a new job this week teaching second grade in Bangkok.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

FOREMAN: David Mattingly, you are closer to all these people who knew him or talking to people than most of us were. I don't know what to make of this. Do you have a sense from them, if most of them think he was capable of doing this?

MATTINGLY (on camera): They will all tell you the people who know him best, they will say he was somewhat different, that he did stand out in a crowd but he was a good student, he wasn't someone they were afraid of, not someone that they thought would commit murder.

So they are very confused, as the authorities are, authorities are always saying he's from Georgia but we're very hard pressed to find anyone here who knows anything about him.

FOREMAN: Fascinating stuff, David Mattingly, thanks so much. We're joined on the phone from Pleasant Hill, California, Michael Rains, he is the lawyer for ex-wife of John Karr, her name is Laura. Thanks for joining us, Mr.Rains.

I want to ask the same question to you. What do you make of this? And what did your client make of this when this came up?

MICHAEL RAINS, LAURA KARR'S ATTORNEY (on phone): Well, my client was shocked. She learned about these events when the media person contacted her at her house last night and of course, she had never heard about any connection of Mr. Karr to the Ramsey murder.

So, she was pretty shocked about that. Notwithstanding the fact that of course she's been divorced since 2001 and, the circumstances of the divorce were not good and she does not have good feelings about her former husband.

FOREMAN: Did she have a sense immediately when they talked about the murder time of saying, no, he was never gone on a Christmas, he couldn't have done this? Or just generally that they lived in Alabama?

RAINS: That is her best recollection. Is that during the period of their marriage she could not recall him ever being away from the family, three boys, and she could not recall him being away from them at any time during Christmas season and ...

FOREMAN: Specifically on Christmas Day, so presumably she would remember.

RAINS: ... going back 10 years. So she's going to be checking documents, Christmas photographs she's kept through the years we're going to try to make sure that that recollection is accurate.

FOREMAN: How does she -- what does she think is going to happen now? Does she think this is going to just work its way out? Does she think he was even capable of something like this?

RAINS: Well, understand, she married this man thinking that they he was not the kind of man that would be interested

in child pornography, only to be shocked and saddened to find out that authorities on California had assimilated a case against him on just that.

So she thinks that there is a certain side to him that might be capable of almost anything. She certainly was shocked with the other news and I think at this point in time she doesn't know what to think about these allegations.

FOREMAN: In her time with him, did she witness any violent acts by him?

RAINS: No. No. Not -- admittedly, I've had a brief discussion and I'm going to be spending a lot more time with her, because I've called the district attorney in Boulder and I said I think probably they should interview her. They've not done that.

And I intend to spend more time with her. In the brief time I spent with her I would say the answer to that would be no. No violent conduct nor anything certainly around her own kids or other kids, other friends, that would have led her to believe that he would be violent toward young children.

FOREMAN: Michael Rains, attorney for the ex-wife of this gentleman, thank you so much for visiting with us, out in California tonight.

We clearly do not have a complete portrait of this man yet. Not by a long shot but we have a lot more information than we did 24 hours ago, as sketchy as it may be.

John Douglas is a former FBI profiler who was with us last night just after the story broke. John, you have been listening to this all day today. What have your thoughts about? I suspect that you also have doubts about this man being the man who committed the murder in this house. JOHN DOUGLAS, FORMER FBI PROFILER: I do. I'm starting to have some problems, things don't appear to be what I would expect as far as the killer in the JonBenet Ramsey case. The JonBenet Ramsey case was an extremely vicious homicide. When I did the analysis back in 1997, I informed the investigators I was working with that, to me, it was almost personal, personal against the -- Mr. Ramsey himself.

I would expect in the kind of questions you asked with your last guest, the types of questions and answers I would want, is that you would expect to find with any suspect develop a history of violent behavior. If you don't find that, I wouldn't necessarily eliminate the subject but I would put him on a backburner for now.

I'm just wondering why then the prosecutor, and I listened to the press conference -- do they have any other information? We had a two and a half page ransom note. We do have the subject writing letters to the Ramseys as well as a professor at the University in Colorado.

You can do some analysis with that, you can do a psycholinguistic analysis and comparison of the content to determine whether it has common authorship. You can also do, if you have the envelope and he was licking the envelope, you can do DNA from the envelope as well.

But going to back to Karr and looking back to him I'm kind of flashing back to like Lee Harvey Oswald, kind of an appearance to the guy, appears to be a very meek type of individual. I would expect, would want to see in his background a propensity for violence. Coming from him in the past.

We are a reflection of our past. A prediction ...

FOREMAN: What do you ...

DOUGLAS: OK, go ahead.

FOREMAN: Let me ask you this -- what do you make of the way he answered these questions? Put aside the violence issue and said it doesn't seem to be in his personal life evidence of this, what do you make of the way he answered these questions? It struck me as odd. He neither said actually that I did it, at least from we heard but then he said he was there. What do you make of that?

DOUGLAS: He didn't -- that's right, didn't establish credibility, provide some information specific information that we know is true. I've had killers say, they've done vicious murders, that I loved her, didn't want to hurt her.

But with him, it just seems inappropriate this kind of inappropriate affect and the questions, and answers he's giving to the questions is inappropriate as well at this point.

But I would expect that they would have something, maybe during the arrest, you can't look at someone just because he's obsessed with Polly Klaas, obsessed with JonBenet Ramsey case, I've come across many, many people like this and you get these false confessions. But once you start -- tell me something we don't know about the investigation, then you start determining whether or not we're looking at the right guy.

FOREMAN: And it seems they would have to answer not just one thing about the investigation but a lot of things.

DOUGLAS: That's right. Has to be a lot of things. And the other thing you have to look at and from the research I've done, you looking for a precipitating event or stressor. As an example, if he got in a fight with his wife, if he was having financial problems, if he lost a job, that generally is a precipitating event that pushes him out the door to perpetrate the crime.

If you see, around him, start to do an assessment, kind of this is your life story about this individual and don't find any of these events going on there and you start questioning, I mean, what do we have here? Are we really looking for the right guy or some inadequate nobody who is trying to get face time and be a somebody for the first time in his life?

FOREMAN: John Douglas, you have tremendous insights, I could listen to all evening. But we do need to move along. Putting this puzzle together. Thank you for your time on all of this. The murder of JonBenet Ramsey was not, of course, the only - it was the only homicide record in that year, in 1986 but this community, of course, is not free of violent crime. Here is the raw data to consider.

According to the city of Boulder's Web site, there were 42 rapes in 2005, 34 robberies, 120 sexual assaults, 140 cases of aggravated assault and 61 reports of arson. But when it comes to this case, what a difference 24 hours makes. What seemed like a potentially huge break in the case has now become at least confusing to people here and maybe a cataclysm to some who felt it really was going to finally be the big turning point.

May still be, but it's not certain tonight.

Coming up, the questions that linger in the face of all of the facts that don't quite add up. Plus, DNA is the gold standard of evidence. Would eventually point to JonBenet's killer. We'll look at that when this special edition of 360 continues.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

FOREMAN: Look at this, 1998 psychic's drawing of a suspect in the JonBenet Ramsey case and John Karr, the man arrested in Thailand. You can draw your own conclusion about that odd coincidence if nothing else. Having a suspect in custody is a far cry from having a full case put together or a conviction.

What we do know is this. Today John Karr said in public and in front of television cameras that he was in the basement of this house with JonBenet Ramsey. He said that he loved her. He said her death was an accident.

His statements have raised a great many new questions but they haven't come close to answering all the old ones.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

FOREMAN (voice-over): In this quiet town, nagging questions have always surround the theory that an unknown intruder killed JonBenet and if Karr has given a confession and if it is true and if he is to be charged, authorities will want those questions answered.

QUESTION: What happened?

KARR: Her death was an accident.

FOREMAN: How did a killer get into the house? Police sources said at the beginning there was no forced entry, no footprints in the snow. Those assertions have been challenged in the years since and a window was apparently left unlocked.

But in the neighborhood, no witnesses reported a passing car, a vagrant, a barking dog, nothing of value for police.

How did the intruder navigate the darkened house to find his victim, brutally kill her and hide the body without waking anyone? Investigators said from the outset the house was a sprawling maze of hallways, rooms, staircases and closets.

The storage room where the body was found was even overlooked by police when they first searched the house for the missing girl and by the way, Karr lived in Alabama at the time of the murder.

Why did the killer leave a ransom note for a murder? The handwritten note contained details about John Ramsey's past and his personal finances which a casual acquaintance would not know.

PATSY RAMSEY, JONBENET'S MOTHER: I go down the spiral staircase and there on one of the runs of the stair is the three-page ransom note.

FOREMAN (on camera): And the questions just go on and on, why did the killer use a broken paint brush from Patsy's hobby kit to twist a cord around JonBenet's neck? Why did no phone call ever comfort supposed ransom before the body was found?

(voice-over): Such questions have made the authorities highly cautious about reaching any conclusions.

(on camera): One of the arguments all along has been that Boulder authorities have simply been too cautious. And that's why there has never been an arrest. What do you think?

LACY: I'm not commenting further at this time.

FOREMAN: You can't even talk about that?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Excuse us, sir. Thank you very much.

FOREMAN (voice-over): And for now, the questions are still outrunning the answers.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

FOREMAN (on camera): In a moment our roundtable of experts will help us sort out some of those old questions. But first let's have a 360 bulletin from New York with Rick Sanchez. Rick?

SANCHEZ: Thanks, John. We're going to start in West Virginia, a Tri-State airport in Huntington was evacuated today after two containers in a woman's carryon luggage tested positive for explosives, there's no word on what was in the passenger's containers. The FBI was interviewing the woman who so far has not been arrested or charged.

A federal judge in Detroit today ruled that the National Security Agency cannot continue to monitor the Americans' phone calls and e-mails without warrants. It's a major setback for the Bush administration which immediately appealed the ruling. A 44-page decision said it violates the First and Fourth Amendments to the constitution and the Foreign Surveillance Act of 1978.

New worries about North Korea, U.S. military intelligence officials say that recent imagery showing bundles above suspected North Korean nuclear site could mean that North Korea is planning an underground nuclear test but they say the development is minor and there is no way to draw any firm conclusions about this, at least at this point.

Also this. In Los Angeles, actor Mel Gibson has pleaded no contest to a misdemeanor drunken driving charge, he could have been sentenced to six months in jail but he got instead three years probation. The actor has a blood alcohol level of 0.12, well above the legal limit there in the state when he was stopped along the Pacific Coast Highway last month.

During the arrest Gibson made anti-Semitic remarks which were later made public. Since then Gibson entered a recovery program and apologized to his fans and to Jewish leaders as well. Tom, back over to you.

FOREMAN: Thanks, Rick.

John Karr's startling confession or near-confession. In a moment our roundtable of experts will discuss what they think about it and a leading expert on false confessions will talk to us about why he is not buying it. Stick around right here on 360.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

LACY: John Mark Karr, 41 years old, was arrested for the murder of JonBenet Ramsey yesterday morning at approximately 6:00 a.m. in Bangkok, Thailand.

He seems to have said he did it but is he telling the truth? A roundtable of experts joins us now. CNN's legal analyst Jeffrey Toobin. We're also joined by Lawrence Shiller, the author of "Perfect Murder, Perfect Town" a book about this murder that attracted

attracted a lot of attention. And of course Craig Silverman, former Denver chief deputy D.A. He's joining us from down around Denver, about an hour away from here.

Let me start with you, Jeffrey Toobin. When you heard this statement today, that he was with JonBenet but her death was an accident, what did you think?

JEFFREY TOOBIN, CNN LEGAL ANALYST: Well, I thought this is a pretty weird guy saying something pretty weird, but you know, I'm thinking back to 24 hours ago when we were sitting here saying, you know, let's not rush to judgment convicting this guy.

Today, it seems like, you know, we should think about not rushing to judgment acquitting him. There is so much more that we don't know. It's worth remembering, Mary Lacy the district attorney said today that this fellow has been arrested. There does exist an arrest warrant for him, which means there's a statement of probable cause which will be released publicly when he's arraigned.

We don't know what it says. So I think even though his statement does appear whacky and not supported by the facts, it's also possible there's evidence we don't know that could be highly incriminating.

FOREMAN: That's certainly possible. Craig Silverman, let me ask you this, though. When you hear the attorney for the former wife saying she never saw any violence, when you hear her saying that she never remembered him being gone on a Christmas, that he lived with her in Alabama at the time, no matter their hard feelings now after a divorce, what do you make of that?

CRAIG SILVERMAN, FORMER CHIEF DEPUTY D.A.: I think it's damaging. Of course, if the forensic evidence matches up, especially the 600-pound gorilla, the DNA, none of that will matter.

Those with prosecutorial experience have seen a lot of family members come in. But I think it is unique that this ex-wife, who is not on good terms, is making this kind of a statement.

So I wonder if the prosecution took the time to talk to family members. Maybe they were worried if they talked to the ex-wife or the father, who also said when he was arrested in Sonoma County, he told the father, "Hey, I'm arrested for the murder of JonBenet Ramsey."

Put all this together and the weird statements today, the downright delusional statements today. It appears the prosecution may have a problem.

FOREMAN: Lawrence Schiller, I remember you interviewed so, so many people for your book here, doing very exhaustive research. Did this guy ever come up at all? Or even a hint of him? LAWRENCE SCHILLER, AUTHOR, "PERFECT MURDER, PERFECT TOWN": No. His name never surfaced. In November I interviewed Lou Smit from day one. He was hired by the Boulder district attorney's office said this was a sexual predator who committed the crime.

Lou said at that time that they had started with a list of about 167 sexual predators but now the list was narrowed down to just a few people. I don't know if he was giving me a hint.

We know now that this gentlemen has been corresponding with Mr. Tracey at the University of Colorado in Boulder for over two years. So, Tracey, who feeds a lot of information to the current district attorney and to Lou Smit and receives hundreds and thousand of letters, certainly had some feeling along the line when he turned over his e-mails.

The question is, how did they find this gentleman by e-mail? It took some time. He disappeared five years ago. The question is, is he well-read on the subject? Is he over-read on the subject? Did he accidentally say something that incriminated him?

Certainly, we saw -- we saw a walk today reminiscent of Lee Harvey Oswald on the second floor of the Dallas police station 43 years ago, same type of craziness by a local police department.

FOREMAN: One of the contentions here is that he knew things about the crime that nobody else knew. Lawrence Schiller, you knew so much about this, and this is 10 years of information filtering around. If somebody out there is obsessed about a crime, couldn't they find out a lot of things you wouldn't expect them to know?

SCHILLER: I don't know think it's what he knows about the crime, and that hasn't been substantiated. That's only hearsay from local police.

I think what's important is what does he know about the crime that the police don't have the answers to? How did he actually kill her? Did he hit her with a blow to the head first? Did he strangle her first? What happened to the murder weapon? What was the murder weapon?

We have a paint brush which was broken to form the handle of the garrote, but there's a third piece of that paint brush missing. And that's very, very important.

If he wrote the ransom note and laid in waiting, quite honestly was he scared that somebody would come in and find him? Did he know the whereabouts of the family? And how did he come up with that \$118,000 figure that was so close to John Ramsey's bonus?

And if he took her from her room down the stairs, because there was garland from the staircase found in her hair wrapped around the garrote, you know, was he worried that a parent would all of a sudden show up and all of a sudden see, well, did the child have to go to the bathroom? There are so many variables in this story that we need to know what he knows. FOREMAN: We're going to pick up on those in a moment. Lawrence Schiller, Jeffrey Toobin and Craig Silverman.

Stick with us, there's much more to talk about, including that ransom note. Handwriting analysis of it at the time didn't produce a conclusive decision about who wrote the note, but a forensics evidence -- we'll be talking a little bit about that what role that does play and comparing it side by side with the handwriting samples from John Karr.

You don't want to miss it when 360 continues.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MICHAEL TRACEY, UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO PROFESSOR: I'm not going to say what it is. One particular thing.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Was its a detail that hadn't been reported?

TRACEY: No, no. It was...

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Details...

TRACEY: There was one particular thing that made me decide I had to do try to do something.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

FOREMAN: That's Michael Tracey, the University of Colorado journalism professor. He'd been communicating with John Karr by e- mail, and that started this whole sequence of events lately.

We're going to pick up with our roundtable here. Jeffrey Toobin, CNN senior legal analyst; Lawrence Schiller, the author of "Perfect Murder, Perfect Town", a terrific book; and Craig Silverman, a former prosecutor down near Denver.

Let me ask you this, if I can, Jeffrey Toobin. There were five different handwriting analyses of Patsy Ramsey's handwriting against this handwriting. Let's bring up a picture of the ransom note and Patsy Ramsey's handwriting next to it. These seem to be inconclusive in terms of proving who did this.

Now look at John Karr's handwriting up next to it. None of us are experts. We can't tell that much about it. But the question for you, Jeffrey Toobin, is in court, can this be established by some kind of expert as a link to this note and John Karr?

TOOBIN: When I was a prosecutor, I frequently used handwriting experts, and one thing you learn is that it's not an exact science. It's not fingerprints. It's not DNA. But it does have certain protocols.

You ask a suspect to write out the alphabet, to write out certain sentences, to follow the same letters in the suspect document. We don't have that kind of good comparison with John Karr and the ransom note. Those are just brief snatches of handwriting there.

To my untutored eye it looks ambiguous. Could be the same person, might not be. Again, I don't think you would find a certain proof one way or another. You usually don't with handwriting analysis.

FOREMAN: Craig Silverman, I guess one of the problems is, even if you bring in experts, you've got to convince a jury to look at this and understand it in a certain way.

If you were prosecuting this case right now against John Karr and you were trying to build it, you were going to bring charges, what would be the key things that you would be looking for?

SILVERMAN: Well, I'd be looking at the ransom note. For example, the handwriting, if it's close, that's good for your case, but if he can be excluded, that's terrible.

The other thing that perhaps he was able to reveal in these e- mails is some explanation of the terms in the ransom note that we have never quite understood, for example the way it's signed off, SBTC. There are all sorts of references in this ransom note that the killer and ransom note writer would understand and perhaps he explained that which gave them the confidence to make this very public arrest.

FOREMAN: Lawrence Schiller, one of the questions in all of this is yesterday, so many people were saying now the Ramseys have been vindicated. What do you think today?

SCHILLER: Well, I don't think the Ramseys or anybody will be vindicated until there's a conviction or a confession that's approved by a court on a plea bargain. It's very, very clear that we may be close.

But you know, what has happened in Thailand is not a good judicial process. Look, we've got DNA in JonBenet's pants, foreign DNA. Ironically, the pants were manufactured in Thailand. And for a long time, law enforcement thought that that DNA may have come from the manufacturing process.

But if John Mark Karr's DNA doesn't match the foreign DNA found in JonBenet's pants, no matter what he said today, a U.S. attorney will use that as a defense. "The killer is out there, this is not John Karr's DNA. You know, he may have just wanted 15 minutes of fame."

TOOBIN: Tom, I think you need to think of another obligation that the district attorney had here, which is to the kids in Thailand.

Remember, here she has a known -- a guy who was married to a 12- year-old girl, who was charged with child porn,

who was in Bangkok, a city notorious for sexual abuse of children. He's out there. He's confessed to this crime. He's teaching young -- young children in Thailand, starting this week. What's a district attorney supposed to do? Go ahead and let him teach these little kids?

I think it is a -- certainly, she might have erred on the side of locking him up quickly and see what evidence she has so that she wasn't asked six months from now how could you let this guy teach young children, knowing what did you about him?

SILVERMAN: Here's what she could have done...

FOREMAN: I'd love to give you last word, but we're running out of all of our words here.

SILVERMAN: OK.

FOREMAN: Thank you so much. We're going to see you next hour. Jeffrey Toobin, as well. Lawrence Schiller, thanks for being here. We'll continue this dissection of all these things going on.

And we're going to look closer at DNA. Everybody thinks it is a cornerstone of this case, no matter whom is ever brought to trial or if anyone's brought to trial. We'll have more on that.

Also an expert on confessions. False confessions. That's when 360 continues.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

SANCHEZ: Welcome back to New York. I'm Rick Sanchez.

What John Karr said in public today is important. What he told authorities perhaps even more so, but the linchpin will likely be DNA, a real physical evidentiary link to this crime.

We know that John Karr was given a mouth swab in Thailand. What could that possibly lead to?

Earlier we spoke with Professor Lawrence Koblinsky at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York. He's an expert on DNA.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

SANCHEZ: Do they already have some form of DNA? Somebody else's DNA on the scene, do you know?

LAWRENCE KOBLINSKY, JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE: Well, what we do know is that is DNA underneath JonBenet's fingernails.

SANCHEZ: Whose?

KOBLINSKY: We don't know that, and furthermore, there's DNA in her panties. We don't know the source of that, either, but we do know it's from a male. And clearly, the police have checked the national database, the DNA database and have not come up with a match.

SANCHEZ: Look, how important is the DNA in this case? KOBLINSKY: Well, it's critical. I mean, there are two very important pieces of evidence. One is the ransom note, and the second piece is the DNA. And clearly, DNA trumps all kinds of other physical evidence. If it's a match, then the case is finished, as I said, but it may not.

SANCHEZ: Do you think from what you've been able to see and from that statements that have been given, and by his own statements, that he may have been prematurely arrested?

KOBLINSKY: I certainly think he was prematurely arrested. I think that the D.A. should with waited until she had some more solid evidence that links him to the crime.

And I'll tell you something else, Rick. A lot of things he said has been contradicted by the autopsy report. We know, for example, he claims he had sexual intercourse with this young 6-year-old. The autopsy report doesn't say that at all. There is some abrasion to the vaginal vault. There is some congestion in that area, but it doesn't say -- there was no semen. There was no sexual assault, no evidence of that.

SANCHEZ: Wouldn't the question then be why is the police department, in this case the D.A., going ahead and arresting him? If you have questions and you're out here in New York, they should know the case through and through, why would they do that?

KOBLINSKY: I'll tell you why. He fits the profile. He's been obsessed with JonBenet. He's been writing letters to Patsy Ramsey. He's been e-mailing that fellow at Colorado University. So he's got all of the qualifications to be the person.

SANCHEZ: But look, you work with police departments and you work with district attorneys on all types of cases. Is there a possibility that there is something else that they're putting as their priority in this case? The D.A. mentioned

today something about public safety, and she's worried about flight risk, as well.

KOBLINSKY: Well, I think that is correct. I think he is a flight risk, and I think there is an issue of public safety since he was hired to teach young children in Thailand.

SANCHEZ: Let me be more direct. In other words, if what she -- if she really believed that he is the guy, wouldn't she say, our priority is to get him here because we think he did it and we're convinced of it. But she didn't say that.

KOBLINSKY: It's not enough. It's really not enough. You need to have some kind of linkage that shows that he was involved in the crime. He may have not have been the killer, but he may know who the killer is. Something of substance, something that involves forensics that shows he could have been the perpetrator or knew something about it.

SANCHEZ: How long will it be going to take to get the DNA samples? KOBLINSKY: Very quickly. I think what they'll do is bring these cheek swabs back to the states. They'll do some testing. It will take about two or three days. They may do some additional testing that will focus in on male DNA, so-called YSTR DNA work. If that is the case, it will take four or five days.

SANCHEZ: You say if it is him in terms a match the game is over, but if it's not? Does that mean he's in the clear?

KOBLINSKY: Absolutely not. It just means that that DNA on panties did not come from him.

Now we don't know when it was deposited there. It could have been years before the actual crime took place. So, DNA may be very helpful if there's match, but if there's not a match, we don't know.

SANCHEZ: Professor Larry Koblinsky, thanks so much, as usual, for joining us.

KOBLINSKY: Pleasure. Thank you, Rick. Thank you.

SANCHEZ: Appreciate it.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

SANCHEZ: And along with the evidence, of course, as we've said, there are the words. The statement from John Karr, fact or fiction? An expert on false confessions gives his take. That's coming up.

We're also going to hear from someone who knows John Karr. His brother Nate. He insists, by the way, he's innocent. Find out why when this special edition of 360 continues.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOHN MARK KARR, ACCUSED OF JONBENET RAMSEY MURDER: Her death was an accident.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: So you were in the basement?

KARR: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Can you tell us about your connection to the Ramsey family?

KARR: No comment on that.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: How did you get into the basement to play with her?

KARR: No comment on that.

(END VIDEO CLIP) SANCHEZ: Let's talk about what John Karr says. He says that he was at the Ramsey home the night JonBenet Ramsey died. He says her death was an accident. Seems to be almost taking credit for it. But our next guest doesn't buy that.

Saul Kassin is a professor of psychology at Williams College and leading researcher into false confessions. He joins me live now from Albany, New York.

What is it, Professor, about what he's saying that you don't buy?

SAUL KASSIN, PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY, WILLIAMS COLLEGE: Well, I'm actually agnostic about the statement that he's made. I don't buy it or not buy it.

I think it's important and interesting, I think we should take stock of the fact that we're talking critically about this confession. Three or five years ago, people would accept a confession at face value.

And I say largely to the credit of the Innocence Project and the DNA exonerations, about 20 percent of which had confessions in evidence, we actually understand now that there is that myth that I would never confess to a crime I did not commit. So we're having this conversation.

SANCHEZ: What about in this particular case? What does he have to gain in this case, as far as you can tell and with your experiences, from saying something like this, from seemingly taking credit for a crime?

KASSIN: I can't comment on his specific case. I can say that in general terms people do confess to crimes they didn't commit, and they do it for different reasons. If you look at his particular case, I think you want to shine two spotlights, one on him the person. And I think he has raised enough issues over the course of today that people want to know more about him and what motivates him.

SANCHEZ: Let's talk for a minute about what we have so far to work with. We have this tape that we've seen of him. The question as we watch it -- we're going to play it for you and for our viewers, as well -- is, is he telling the truth or is he lying? That's what so many people are trying to figure out. Let's watch it. And we'll come back on the other side.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: What happened?

KARR: Her death was an accident.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: So, you were in the basement?

KARR: Yes.

(END VIDEO CLIP) SANCHEZ: Some people are calling that a confession. We're not. You are an expert on confessions. What do you key in on there?

KASSIN: Well, first of all, I think it's important to distinguish between a simple admission of guilt, which that is...

SANCHEZ: Yes.

KASSIN: ... and a full narrative confession, which that is not. And if there was a confession taken at an earlier point of time, I haven't heard it and I haven't seen it aired. So all we have to go on in this simple admission. And the difference is a confession contains the details, the details of not just what I did but how I did it and why I did it. And I haven't heard anything of that nature.

SANCHEZ: It sounds like, from what you're telling us and all our viewers tonight, is that we tend to pay too much attention to confessions, to what people say and that should not be used to make or break a case?

KASSIN: Absolutely. And confession has always been considered the gold standard in evidence in criminal law. And I think in part because of the rise of DNA and the quality of the DNA evidence, people understand now some of those limitations in confessions.

Confession evidence -- confession evidence is flawed. People do confess to crimes they didn't commit. And there's a second myth it's important to debunk, and that is the myth that I'd know a false confession if I saw one.

SANCHEZ: Is it the police's fault that we get these confessions? Are they pushing too much? Are they essentially giving the suspect what they want to hear? So he gives it to them back?

KASSIN: In some cases that may be the case. There are really different types of false confessions.

Some false confessions you would call voluntary false confessions. These are cases -- and this may well be one of them, if it's a false confession -- in which a suspect, who was innocent, claims credit or takes blame for a crime he didn't commit without any pressure from police.

And you tend to find that in high-profile crimes. The great historic example is the Charles Lindberg baby kidnapping in 1932. As soon as that high profile crime hit newspapers, 200 people volunteered confessions. And we know that 200 people couldn't have done the kidnapping.

SANCHEZ: Yes.

KASSIN: You see that often in high-profile cases. People come out of woodwork to confess to those situations.

SANCHEZ: Interesting research. And if it's a trend, certainly, it's a troublesome trend. We thank you, professor, for taking time to talk to us today. Hope to see you again.

KASSIN: Thank you.

SANCHEZ: Straight ahead, whether or not John Karr is the man, how are predators identified? How do you see the

real world in that case?

Later a window into Mr. Karr's life. His brother will be joining us to tell us what he thinks of this case. All ahead in this special edition of 360.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

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