

Burke Ramsey

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The BDI Theories

Virtually all the BDI theories presume that the parents helped stage a cover-up to avoid losing their only remaining child living at home. The theories mostly vary in terms of Burke's motivation. Dr. Werner Spitz [concluded](#): "It's the boy who did it, whether he was jealous, or mentally unfit or something ... I don't know of the why, I'm not a psychiatrist, but what I am sure about is what I know about him, that is what happened here."

- **Motivation**
 - **Accidental Death.** In some theories, Burke killed JBR accidentally and the parents staged a cover-up to protect him from this truth (see [GuruJosh's post #12](#)).
 - **Anger Over Stolen Pineapple.** The 2016 CBS documentary and James Kolar's book *A Foreign Faction* advanced the theory that Burke may have accidentally killed her in a temporary burst of anger in response to JBR's having taken some of his pineapple. This theory would explain why the bowl had Burke's fingerprints on it, but not JBR's as well as why that bowl was left out with so much uneaten pineapple and milk left in it).
 - **Jealousy.** Others speculate Burke may have been jealous over the undue attention accorded JBR due to her beauty pageants. In this view, Burke's hitting JBR in the face with a golf club 2 years earlier may not have been as "accidental" as the parents portrayed it.
 - **Sex Play Gone Awry.** Others believe it was a game of "playing doctor" gone awry, again with parental involvement in the cover-up (see [Troy Cowan's theory](#) and [azwriter's post 21](#)).
 - **Sexual Abuse.** One [theory](#) implies that Burke sexually abused his sister and that BPD facilitated the cover-up by letting Pam Paugh remove incriminating evidence from the crime scene.
- **Books.** Five books have been written presenting BDI theories. Full publication details and links [here](#).
 - **DocG 2015.** *Ruled In: Solving the JonBenét Ramsey Case.*
 - **Von Duyke & Wallington 1998.** Eleanor Von Duyke and Dwight Wallington. *A Little Girl's Dream? A JonBenét Ramsey Story.*
 - **Wecht & Bosworth 1998.** Cyril H. Wecht and Charles Bosworth, Jr. *Who Killed JonBenét? A Leading Forensic Expert Uncoveres the Shocking Facts.*
- **On-line Discussions.** See [BORG Theories](#) and [Burke Ramsey](#) at Webbsleuths forum chat.

Incriminating Evidence Related to Burke Ramsey

Burke Never Officially Cleared

- **Hunter Affidavit Does Not Clear Burke.** BDI theorists claim Burke has *not* been cleared since that term is never used in the Alex Hunter affidavit. The Ramsey's lawyer, Lin Wood, [drafted](#) the affidavit signed by Hunter and BDI theorists believe it is significant that he slightly amended the wording first before signing it.
- **Evidence Hunter Suspected Burke.** [According](#) to Ryan Ross "Boulder District Attorney Alex Hunter is among those who privately considered the possibility that Burke played a role in the death of his sister. "I wonder if Burke is involved in this," Hunter mused out loud one day, former Boulder police detective Steve Thomas wrote in his book published in 2000...Hunter declared publicly in 1999 that Burke wasn't a suspect in his sister's death. But later events suggested that statement wasn't as definitive as it seemed:
 - In 2000 Hunter refused a request by Ramsey attorney Wood to sign a statement declaring under oath that "all questions related to" Burke's "possible involvement" in the death of his sister "were resolved to the satisfaction of investigators."
 - He also refused to declare that Burke "has never been viewed by investigators as a suspect." Nor would he say that Burke "has not been and is not a suspect."
- **Burke Too Young to Be Official "Suspect."** BDI theorists argue that due to his age, Burke could never become an official "suspect" and for that reason, neither could he ever be officially "cleared."

Grand Jury Solved Case

- Instead, BDI theorists claim that the Grand Jury solved the case in 1999 by concluding Burke (too young to be accused of even manslaughter) accidentally killed his sister, perhaps with the involvement of Doug Stine and possibly one older perp (see [Was There a Cover-up?](#) on the [Interpretation of Evidence](#) page).

Defamation Suits Not Dispositive

- First, settling often is cheaper than allowing a case to go to trial especially given uncertainty about jury verdicts. But this does not prove Burke would have or should have won on the merits of his claims that BDI theories are defamatory.
- Second, [according](#) to Juror13 at [shakedowntitle.com](#), Burke did it theories have been the topic of *numerous* media stories. Yet the vast majority of these never resulted in defamation suits:
 - [November 5, 1999, Court TV](#)
 - [1999: New York Post](#)
 - [1999: The Star](#)
 - [1999: New York Post](#)
 - [2001: Daily Camera](#)
 - [2001: Daily Camera](#)
 - [2003: Fox News \[Burke Ramsey named a defendant\]](#)
 - [2010: Daily Mail](#)
 - [2010: CBS](#)
 - [2010: CNN](#)
 - [2012: The Daily Mail](#)
 - [2012: Huffington Post](#)
 - [2012: Fox News](#)
 - [2013: CNN](#)
 - [2016: News.com.au](#)

Parents Lied

- BDI theorists argue that the parents lied about numerous things, but since DNA and handwriting evidence exonerates the parents, the only plausible motivation for lying is to cover up for Burke. Evidence of lying includes:

- **Burke's Voice on 911 Tape.** The 911 tape, which BDI theorists are convinced has Burke's voice at the end, proving conclusively that the parents lied about his being in bed asleep at the time the call was made. See detailed discussion of 911 call [here](#).
- **Basement Window. John Ramsey** [lied](#) about the open basement window.

Cover-up Conspiracy

- Internet poster **Spade** [claims](#) there was a widespread conspiracy to cover up the crime from the very day JBR's body was found and that this can best be [explained](#) by a BDI theory.
- **Spade** has also [claimed](#) that he's asked a friend who has worked for an intelligence agency for 30+ years to get the Ramseys missing phone records from December 1996; this friend was unsuccessful and also was warned to "leave this case alone."

Behavior in Interviews Was Suspicious

On January 8, 1997, Burke was interviewed with his parents' consent and outside of their presence by a psychologist, Dr. Suzanne Bernhard. Based on excerpts of that interview aired on the Dr. Phil show and in the 2016 CBS News documentary, both CBS investigators ([paragraphs 619-624](#)) and some Internet posters have argued Burke's demeanor and answers were very suspicious and incriminating.

Burke Had "Odd" Anti-Social Personality

- Ramsey gardner Brian Scott recalled: "The neighborhood kids would come by from time to time. JonBenet seemed to socialize with them just fine. Her brother, Burke, was three years older. He almost never said a word to me. Just played by himself in the backyard, completely occupied with his own projects...He always seemed to play alone" (PMPT:4).

Similar Cases of 9-Year-Old Killers

- While admittedly rare, there are recorded [instances](#) of sexual assault by 9-year boys on girls in the 6-year old range.
- **Danny Murphy.** [According](#) to Criminal Minds wiki, "One night in April 20, 2009, while up in the middle of the night working on one of his planes, a World War II-era B-25 Mitchell bomber, 9-year-old Danny was found by his younger brother Kyle ([age 7](#)), who told him their parents would be mad if they found him up this late. When Kyle then asked to see his new plane, Danny told him he could look at it but not touch it. While gone for only a few seconds, Danny returned to find that Kyle had accidentally smashed the plane and, in a fit of rage, killed his brother. Discovering what he had done, Danny's parents, [Dan and Sarah](#), having just lost one son and finding the thought of the other being taken away unbearable, made it look like Kyle was the latest victim of a [pedophile](#) who had been abducting, raping, and murdering young boys in the area; their friend, Detective [Bill Lancaster](#), helped out with the plan. Too preoccupied with Kyle's death and trying to cover it up, Sarah, Dan and Bill failed to notice how disturbingly nonchalant Danny was throughout the entire affair, rationalizing he simply did not understand what was going on when the boy's odd behavior is noticed (summary from [Criminal Minds](#)).
- **Connection to JBR Case.** "Kyle's murder may have been inspired by media speculation that [JonBenet Ramsey](#) was murdered by her brother Burke in a fit of rage, and that the Ramsey parents misled the authorities into believing that an intruder was involved in order to not lose their remaining child. Some followers of this theory believe that a toy train set was involved in some fashion, much like how Kyle's murder involved a model plane that belonged to Danny."
- **Danny Profile.** [According](#) to Criminal Minds wiki, "Danny was described as a [sociopath](#) by Prentiss, which she stated made him incapable of feeling anything, such as empathy or guilt, most notably remorse (however, he is capable of feigning emotions, such as when he stated he was sorry after killing Kyle). This was shown when Prentiss asked him how he felt after killing his brother and Danny's answer was a deadpanned "like I would get in trouble". He is also quick to anger and easily frustrated, as shown when he was unable to open a bag of potato chips and then began hitting the bag out of rage." Readers can judge how well this profile fits Burke.
- Also, most "sex game gone awry" theories involving Burke assume a "playing doctor" scenario, as opposed to a sexual assault. Burke was well capable of "playing doctor" and allegedly there are accounts of his getting caught at this with JBR.

Exculpatory Evidence Related to Burke Ramsey

- **On-line Discussion.** See DocG's Solving the JonBenet Ramsey Case for a critique and discussion of BDI theories:
 - [Still More on Burke](#)
 - [Some Ramsey Case Flowcharts](#)
 - [Fantastic Theories - Part Four](#)

Burke Ramsey Officially Cleared

On several occasions, Boulder law enforcement officials have indicated Burke Ramsey was not a suspect or had been cleared in the case. This is the strongest evidence that Burke is not a plausible suspect in this case.

- **1996 Patterson Conclusion.** According to Lin Wood's motion in Burke Ramsey's 2016 defamation case against CBS News, BPD Detective Fred Patterson, after interviewing Burke one-on-one on 12.26.96, "concluded that Burke had no knowledge of what had happened to JonBenet" ([paragraph #499](#)).
- **1998 Beckner Statement.** According to Lin Wood's motion in Burke Ramsey's 2016 defamation case against CBS News, in early 1998, former Boulder PD Chief Mark Beckner stated during a news conference that Burke was not involved in the killing of JonBenet, was not a suspect in JonBenet's murder, and was not being looked at as a suspect ([paragraph #87](#)).
- **1999 and 2000 Alex Hunter Statements.** According to Lin Wood's motion in Burke Ramsey's 2016 defamation case against CBS News:
 - In May of 1999, former Boulder DA Alex Hunter issued a press statement that publicly and officially stated that Burke was not a suspect in connection with the murder of his sister. It said, in part: "[A]most a year ago [Boulder] Police Chief Mark Beckner stated during a news conference that Burke was not a suspect and that we are not looking at him as a possible suspect. To this day Burke Ramsey is not a suspect" ([paragraph #89](#)).
 - In a sworn affidavit dated October 12, 2000, former Boulder DA Alex Hunter reaffirmed under oath that Burke had never been a suspect in the investigation into his sister's murder. A copy of said affidavit is attached hereto as Exhibit "A". The affidavit stated, in part: From December 26, 1996, to the date of this affidavit, no evidence has ever been developed in the investigation to justify elevating Burke Ramsey's status from that of witness to suspect ([paragraph #96](#)).
- **1999 Kane Statement.** Michael Kane was the special prosecutor who oversaw the grand jury investigation into JBR's death. According to Lin Wood's motion in Burke Ramsey's 2016 defamation case against CBS News, "On or about December 12, 1999, Kane publicly acknowledged in a statement to, and published by, the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Sunday *Patriot News* that there was no evidence developed in the investigation that supported an accusation that Burke killed JonBenet:
 - "One of the more horrendous mistakes by the media, Kane said, was the story by a supermarket tabloid, The Star, that branded Burke as the killer. Earlier this month, the Ramseys filed a \$25 million libel suit against the paper. Kane recalled that when the story first came out last May, it troubled the prosecution. And when the story began getting picked up by other newspapers, they knew they had to do something.
 - "Alex Hunter and I decided **there was no basis for that speculation and no evidence to support it**, and we issued a press release to put it to rest," Kane said, "I think it's horrible that a 12-year-old kid would have a finger pointed at him with **no evidence to support it** and have to see his picture on the cover of tabloids every time he's in a supermarket saying that he killed his sister" [emphasis added] ([paragraph #93](#)).
- **2003 Carnes Decision.** According to Lin Wood's motion in Burke Ramsey's 2016 defamation case against CBS News, in 2003, the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia painstakingly analyzed the evidence of JonBenet's murder in connection with a contention that Patsy killed JonBenet. In a March 31, 2003, order entered on a motion for summary judgment, the Honorable Julie Carnes declared that "the weight of the evidence is more consistent with a theory that an intruder murdered JonBenet" ([paragraph #98](#)).
- **2003 Keenan Statement.** According to Lin Wood's motion in Burke Ramsey's 2016 defamation case against CBS News, on April 7, 2003, former Boulder DA Mary Kennan, n/k/a Mary Lacy, issued a press release stating, in part, "I agree with [Judge Carnes'] conclusion that 'the weight of the evidence is more consistent with a theory that an intruder murdered JonBenet than it is with a theory that Mrs. Ramsey did so'" ([paragraph #100](#)).
- **2008 Lacey Statement.** According to Lin Wood's motion in Burke Ramsey's 2016 defamation case against CBS News, on July 9, 2008, former Boulder DA Lacey relied on newly discovered DNA evidence to exonerate the Ramsey Family (including Burke) in an open letter released to the public. DA Lacey declared that: "[N]ew scientific evidence convinces us that it is appropriate, given the circumstances of this case, to state that we do not consider your immediate family including you, your wife, Patsy, and your son, Burke, to be under any suspicion in the commission of this crime ([paragraph #102](#)).

Grand Jury Action Proves Burke's Innocence

- **Ramseys Purportedly Aided a First Degree Murder Suspect.** The jury foreman signed the following true bill for Patsy (and a parallel one for John Ramsey): COUNT VII On Or about December 25, and December 26, 1996 in Boulder County, Colorado, Patricia Paugh Ramsey did unlawfully, knowingly and feloniously render assistance to a person, with intent to hinder, delay and prevent the discovery, detention, apprehension, prosecution, conviction and punishment of such person for the commission of a crime, knowing the person' being assisted has committed and was suspected of the crime of Murder in the First Degree and Child Abuse Resulting in Death.
- **By Law, Burke Ramsey Could Never Have Been a First Degree Murder Suspect.** Some have [argued](#) that because the GJ said the Ramseys assisted in aiding someone who committed first degree murder, they couldn't have meant Burke because a 9 year old couldn't have been charged with first degree murder.

Burke Has Prevailed in Prior Libel/Defamation Cases

- **1999 American Media/Star Suit.** In late 1999, Burke sued American Media, Inc. and Star Editorial, Inc. in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia for libel in connection with the 1999 Star accusations. Burke dismissed this lawsuit after reaching a confidential settlement with the defendants ([paragraph #114](#)).
- **2000 CourtTV Suit.** According to Lin Wood's motion in Burke Ramsey's 2016 defamation case against CBS News, in October and November of 1999, Court TV published press releases promoting its upcoming TV show Who Killed JonBenet Ramsey: Prime Suspects, which was broadcast in November of 1999. Thereafter, Burke sued AOL Time Warner Inc., Time Warner Entertainment Company, LP, Courtroom Television Network, LLC, and Liberty Media Corp. in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia for libel in connection with the accusations in the press releases and for defamation for the accusations in the TV show that falsely conveyed that Burke was a suspect in connection with his sister's death. Burke dismissed this lawsuit after reaching a confidential settlement with the defendants ([paragraph #117](#)).
- **2000 Globe Suit.** According to Lin Wood's motion in Burke Ramsey's 2016 defamation case against CBS News, in May of 2000, Burke sued Globe International, Inc. and Globe Communications, Corp. in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Atlanta and American Media, Inc. in the State Court of Fulton County, Georgia, for libel in connection with the 1998 Globe accusations. Burke

dismissed these lawsuits after reaching confidential settlements with the defendants ([paragraph #112](#)).

- **2000 NY Post Suit.** According to Lin Wood's motion in Burke Ramsey's 2016 defamation case against CBS News, in May of 2000, Burke sued NYP Holdings, Inc. d/b/a The New York Post in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York for libel in connection with the republished Star accusations. Burke dismissed this lawsuit after reaching a confidential settlement ([paragraph #116](#)).
- **No Major Media Accusations Against Burke from 2000-September 2016.** According to Lin Wood's motion in Burke Ramsey's 2016 defamation case against CBS News, "since the time of the above accusations against Burke in 1998 and 1999, no member of the tabloid media or the mainstream media has ever again accused Burke of being involved in—or suspected of—JonBenét's murder. That is, until CBS aired the Documentary" ([paragraph #118](#)).

No Good Evidence Parents Lied

- **911 Call.** There's a sizable body of evidence that [evidence against Burke's voice being on the enhanced 911 tape](#).
- **Ramsey Interviews.** Lin Wood's motion in Burke Ramsey's 2016 defamation case against CBS includes a thorough refutation of claims that the Ramseys lied in various police or media interviews ([detailed in pp. 70-73](#)).

No Good Evidence Burke Lied

- **Could 9-Year Old Withstand Interrogation?** It defies common sense to believe a 9-year old could have successfully withstood LE interrogations without revealing what actually happened or admitting that another friend was involved.
- **Adult Burke Remembers Little.** Internet poster [OceanEyes claims](#) in September 2006 to know someone who knows Burke; this individual reported that Burke claims to have known nothing about what happened that night and barely remembers what happened that night or morning. The friend of Burke's felt Burke was telling the truth about this because the friend wasn't questioning him about it; Burke just brought it up out of nowhere.

Lack of Forensic Evidence

- The DNA does not match Burke Ramsey. [According](#) to Paula Woodward, "Currently, the 1. Colorado Bureau of Investigation DNA analysis, 2. the Cellmark DNA analysis, 3. the Greg LaBerge analysis, 4. the FBI CODIS acceptance of those similar DNA analyses and 5. one Bode Touch DNA analysis test result are similar to each other and exclude Patsy, John, Burke, John Andrew and Melinda Ramsey.

Implausible Motivations

- **Accidental Death.** If Burke killed his sister accidentally, it does not make logical sense for the parents to undertake a cover-up that could put themselves at risk of being accused of JBR's death especially if there was any evidence she was still alive, as calling 911 immediately for medical help might have saved her life. It is implausible that child protective services would have removed Burke from the house simply due to an accident.
- **Anger Over Stolen Pineapple.** The same logic applies even if Burke struck JBR in a temporary fit of anger. Lin Wood's motion in Burke Ramsey's 2016 defamation case against CBS includes a thorough refutation of the "preposterous" theory that Burke killed JonBenét for taking his pineapple ([detailed in pp. 94-98](#)).
- **Jealousy.** The same logic applies even if Burke struck JBR due to jealousy. In the worst case, child protective services might have ordered some sort of counseling, as it would be unlikely they would view Burke as a danger to other children.
- **Sex Play Gone Awry.** The same logic applies even if Burke struck JBR due to jealousy.
- **Sexual Abuse.**

Behavior in Interviews Was Not Suspicious

On January 8, 1997, Burke was interviewed with his parents' consent and outside of their presence by a psychologist, Dr. Suzanne Bernhard. Even though BDI theorists view Burke's behavior in this interview as suspicious, according to Lin Wood's motion in Burke Ramsey's 2016 defamation case against CBS News, Dr. Bernhard herself "concluded in writing on her report to the Boulder PD that it was clear to her that Burke did not witness the murder of his sister" ([paragraph #83](#)).

Implausibility of a Parental or Law Enforcement Cover-up

Lin Wood's motion in Burke Ramsey's 2016 defamation case against CBS includes a thorough refutation of the claim that Burke's inability to be prosecuted due to his age can be interpreted as evidence of his guilt ([detailed in pp. 86-89](#)).

- **Why Would Other Informed Investigators Advance Alternative Theories of Who Did It?** If authorities knew or deduced that Burke had done it based on his interviews with psychologist or police, then way too many things make no sense:
 - **Steve Thomas PDI Theory.** Why would Steve Thomas—who was intimately familiar with the evidence in the case—to have advanced a Patsy-did-it theory?
 - **Lou Smit and Robert Whitson's IDI Theory.** Why would Lou Smit have been tasked with finding intruder evidence and why would he and Robert Whitson cling so fiercely to an IDI theory?
 - **Detective Arndt's JDI Theory.** Why would Detective Arndt be so certain John Ramsey did it?
- **Why Would John Karr Be Arrested?** If Mary Keenan knew that the Boulder grand jury had already concluded Burke did it, why would she waste resources pursuing John Mark Karr and risk looking like a fool when it would be obvious in advance there was no chance whatsoever of any forensic evidence linking him to the crime?
- **Why Would BPD and Boulder DA Keep Pursuing the Case After 1999?** If the Boulder grand jury had already concluded Burke did it, then why would both Boulder DA and BPD continue to have invested resources in solving the case, including additional DNA tests, as one example?
- **Implausibility of Leak-Proof Cover-up.** Skeptics of the BDI theory argue there is no credible evidence of the widespread conspiracy/cover-up that would have had to endure without a single leak during the past 7 years in order for the BDI/cover-up theory to be correct.
- **No Action by Child Protective Services.** Moreover, had Burke been in any way involved in the crime and LE were aware of this, it would have been highly improbable that Child Services would not been involved in some fashion to protect Burke's being a danger to other children or himself.

No Evidence of "Suspicious" Behavior or Psychological Damage

- **Burke's Behavior on Morning of 12/26 Was Not "Suspicious."** Lin Wood's motion in Burke Ramsey's 2016 defamation case against CBS includes a thorough refutation of suspicions about Burke based on purported behavior during the hours after the 9-1-1 call ([detailed in pp. 63-66](#)).
- **Burke's Response to Trauma.** Lin Wood's motion in Burke Ramsey's 2016 defamation case against CBS also includes a thorough refutation of the claim that Burke did not display the correct response to trauma ([detailed in pp. 89-94](#)).
 - **"Acting Out" Would be Inevitable.** Internet poster [heymom](#) has observed: "children who are in any way involved in crimes or acts like this tend to act it out over and over again as they grow up. They will draw pictures of it, or find other ways to express it, or just plain act it out, as with continued sex abuse of young girls. There are other subtle ways that children will attempt to re-do something horrible that has happened to them or been done to them. It is really hard to just completely chase away this kind of awful, horrible, shocking experience from the mind of a young child. Their minds want to go back to it and fix it somehow. So I would be amazed if Burke had actually done this deed, yet never in any way displayed that need to re-visit what happened. Maybe he did, and was therapized out of it. Maybe he did, and we just didn't know. Maybe he tried, but Daddy and Mommy were too close for comfort. Maybe someday he will crack wide open."
 - **Asperger's Syndrome.** It has been [speculated](#) on forums that Burke has Asperger's syndrome; if so, this might explain his "strange" behavior on the day JBR was found missing and in the aftermath, such as his persistent smiling in Dr. Phil interviews.
- **No Evidence of Intensive Therapy.** No evidence of such symptoms or the intensive treatment needed to address them has been offered by BDI theorists.
- **Burke Appeared to be Well-Adjusted in College.**
 - Internet poster [Wombat claims](#): "Burke Ramsey is a socially active sophomore at Purdue University studying to be an engineer and is making good grades. He had a B+ average in high school (around 3.5 IIRC) and was on his high school swim team."
 - Internet poster [Cherokee](#) notes that Burke is living in a regular dorm room--NOT sequestered from the rest of the student body in an apartment or other isolated living situation.

Similar Cases of Falsely Accused Brothers

[According](#) to Nancy Grace, "statistically, sibling homicide, fratricide or sororicide, are practically nonexistent, extremely rare to say the least, especially given the Ramsey family identifying characteristics." There have been other instances in which parents were falsely thought to be covering up for a brother killing a sister.

- In the [Azaria Chamberlain](#) case, "another rumour which gained considerable currency in Australia at the time was that the real culprit was the Chamberlain's son, Aidan, and that his parents were covering up for his guilt." In this case, wrongfully convicted parents were subsequently exonerated by the courts once unequivocal proof surfaced that their daughter had been kidnapped and killed by dingoes.