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Overview

- **Overview.** No stun gun was ever found, but marks found on JBR's body were consistent with a stun gun; hence there is a fierce debate over whether a stun gun was used on JBR. A stun gun seems most consistent with an intruder theory, as there is no evidence the Ramseys owned a stun gun.
- **On-line Discussions.** See [The stun gun company denies possibility](#) under Disproving Myths and [Stun Gun](#) at Websleuths forum chat. Another good discussion of the evidence for and against a stun gun is at [Websleuths](#).
- **Effects of Stun Guns.**
 - Robert Stratbucker has written a [technical paper](#) on the physiological effects of stun guns.
 - **Description.** "The stun gun is designed to key into the nervous system. It dumps its energy into the muscles at a high pulse frequency that makes the muscles work very rapidly, but not very efficiently. This rapid work cycle depletes blood sugar by converting it into lactic acid all in just seconds. The resulting energy loss makes it difficult to move and function. At the same time, the tiny neurological impulses that travel throughout the body to direct muscle movement are interrupted. This causes disorientation and loss of balance, leaving the attacker in a passive and confused condition for several minutes. Still there is no significant effect on the heart and other organs. As a general rule, a 1/4 second contact will repel and startle the attacker, giving intense pain and muscle contraction. One to two seconds will cause intense pain, muscle spasms and a dazed mental state, this may drop the attacker to the ground. Over three seconds will cause intense pain, loss of balance, loss of muscle control, mental confusion and disorientation. Generally any charge over three seconds will cause the aggressor to fall to the ground. The aggressor will be unable to recover for several minutes and effects may last for up to fifteen minutes.
 - **Case Studies.** There are several examples of young girls being paralyzed by stun guns without screaming:
 - **Jaycee Dugard.** [Jaycee was 11 years old when she was abducted after being stun-gunned. The following are excerpts from the 135 pages of Jaycee Dugard's grand jury testimony unsealed Thursday by El Dorado County Superior Court Judge Douglas Phimister:](#)
 - Dugard: And all of a sudden, his hand shoots out of the car window, and I feel this shock. And I stumble back into the, into the bushes. And...I'm sorry.
 - Q: That's all right. Take your time.
 - Dugard: He gets out and I stumble back into the bushes. I'm sitting now in the bushes, trying to get away, but I feel like my whole body is — wouldn't work. It was tingly and I can't — nothing works. All of a sudden, I'm in the car, and there's something on top of me, and I feel like there's pressure on me. ... I was put on the floorboard and then something thrown on top of me, and then legs, pressure, face down. I don't know what happened after that because I think I — because I don't remember the car pulling away, or I felt like I blacked out or something.
 - **Girl Paralyzed by Stun Gun and Did Not Scream.** Internet poster Dixie [reports](#): "This morning Madison went to play with a neighbor's son. My neighbor is a physician who is taking a year off with a new baby. The other child is about 6. Anyway, he got a hold of his dad's stun gun and zapped Madison in the butt with it. She DID NOT scream, she simply dropped like a rock (according to the mother). She (the mom) called me, Madison was not completely unconscious but absolutely out of it for about 10 minutes. She weighs 65 lbs [JBR weighed 45 lbs]."
 - **Ramseys Did NOT Own Stun Gun.** In their book, John Ramsey describes going to a spy store due to his concerns about risks to Access Graphics related to electronic bugging: "As we left, the clerk gave me a videotape catalog to take home. When I returned to Boulder, I threw it into a drawer and completely forgot about the tape. I surmise that as the police went through everything in our house, they found the video catalog, which apparently turned out to have an advertisement for....you got it....stun guns! Not too long after that the police reported to the media that they had found a stun gun "instructional video" in the Ramsey house. So on the one hand they were supporting the stun gun theory, but on the other hand they were not indirectly saying that I had used this weapon on my daughter. Of course, for a period of time the video created a significant uproar and cast further suspicion on me. Later we got a copy of the video catalog from the store in Coral Gables, and found it was recorded in Spanish! Not only had I never reviewed the tape; if I had I wouldn't have understood it" (Ramsey and Ramsey, 2001: 195).

Why Body Not Exhumed

- In principle, exhumation of JBR's body might have resolved the uncertainty about whether a stun gun was used.
- **Parents Do Not Control Exhumation Decisions**
 - **LE Preferences May Trump Parental Desires.** Internet poster [Margoo](#) has noted that it was not up to the family to decide about exhumation; law enforcement was completely in control of this decision and elected not to do so. While they will certainly listen seriously to parental concerns, LE always had the authority to override this. It wouldn't make sense to let suspects in a case be able to control such a critical decision.
 - **Parental Opinions Matter.** Internet poster [Mame](#) has suggested "there is still a preference in modern courtrooms to not disturb the body unless it's of dire importance. And religious and personal requests from the family are always considered and given quite a bit of weight. In order to get a court order the family is always consulted by the judge and LE has to have a really GOOD reason for wanting to do it."
 - **John Ramsey Opposed Exhumation.** John Ramsey was [opposed](#) to exhumation ("We had buried our child, she was at peace, she was safe. That was just an abhorrent thought to me,")
- **Police Against Exhumation**
 - **DA Deferred to Police.** "[Boulder DA Alex] Hunter considered the stun gun theory--"iffy." He talked to the police about exhuming [JonBenet's](#) body, but they were against it" (Schiller 1999a:466; quote and source from Internet poster [Rainsong](#)). It had earlier been [reported](#) by investigate reporter Lawrence Schiller that "in January 1998, Boulder District Attorney Alex Hunter said "Every rock must be turned over, and if that means swabbing everyone's mouth or exhuming [JonBenet's](#) body, that's what the police will have to do." So again, this account implies that it was BPD controlling this decision.
 - **Potential BPD Motivation for Not Pursuing Exhumation.** [Margoo](#) has suggested "The BPD had already publicly DENIED the stun gun theory. They had more to lose by risking a finding that the marks WERE consistent with a stun gun than having THEIR claims confirmed."
 - **Lou Smit Favored Exhumation.** Internet poster [Mame](#) has stated that for a long time after Schiller's book was published, "Lou Smit wanted very badly to exhume the body. He and other professionals felt there was still a good chance they would find the body in good condition. It depended on the type of casket, temperature of the soil, etc." But Smit had resigned from working for the DA in September 1998, so he had no authority to execute his preferences.

Evidence for a Stun Gun

Lin Wood's motion in Burke Ramsey's 2016 defamation case against CBS includes a thorough refutation of the claim in the CBS documentary that Burke caused the stun gun injuries with his train toy ([detailed in pp. 78-82](#)).

- **Marks Were Inflicted on Christmas Night.** "defendants {John and Patsy Ramsey} have presented photographs of [JonBenet](#) taken Christmas morning that clearly reveal the absence of any marks on her neck. (See Defs.' Ex. 33 attach. To Summ. J. Mot. [68](#).) Yet, the autopsy report clearly shows reddish, burn-type marks on [JonBenet's](#) neck and back. (See Autopsy Photos attach. as Defs.' Ex. 27-30 to Smit. Dep.)" (Carnes 2003:98).
- **Forensic Evidence.** The strongest case for a stun gun was made by Lou Smit, a retired detective hired by Boulder DA Alex Hunter. Transcripts of interviews with Lou Smit and companion photos making the case for a stun gun are available at Websleuths for [Court TV \(November 7, 2002\)](#), and [48 Hours \(October 4, 2002\)](#).
- **No Apparent Struggle by JBR.** "Because it is logical to assume that [JonBenet](#) would struggle against an attacker she did not already know, the use of a stun gun helps to explain why no evidence of a struggle was found in any of the bedrooms in defendants' home. (SMF P 143; PSMF P 143.)" (Carnes 2003:98).
- **Expert Opinion.** "Moreover, defendants have presented the testimony of Dr. Michael Doberson, a forensic pathologist who examined the Boulder Coroner's autopsy report and autopsy photos, and who concluded that the injuries to "the right side of the face as well as on the lower left back are patterned injuries most consistent with the application of a stun gun." (Report of Michael Doberson, M.D., Ph.D. at 5(A) attach. as Ex. 3 to Defs.' Ex. Vol. I, Part A.)" (Carnes 2003:98).
- "Defendants' evidence that a stun gun was used, then, stands un rebutted. In other words, plaintiff has failed to produce evidence that creates a material dispute of fact on this point or that offers an alternative explanation for the origin of these marks, other than a stun gun. Accordingly, the Court concludes that the undisputed facts indicate that a stun gun was used in the commission of the murder." (Carnes 2003:98-99).

- **Spacing of Marks Consistent with [AirTaser](#).** Internet poster [LovelyPigeon](#) has done comparisons using photos to demonstrate the marks on the back were 3.5 cm apart, which is consistent with an [AirTaser](#).
- **Stun Guns Do Not Leave Burn Marks.** Commenter Terry B B [stated](#): "Michael Kane's comments about a stun gun "leaving a burn" is bullshit and either he doesn't know what he's talking about or he's out and out lying. Technically, stun guns have a large value resistor placed in series with the prongs to limit the amount of current so that the tissue does not burn!!! Technically, those marks were made by pressure against the skin during strangulation. This is something that I learned during my research of the OCKK case..."

Evidence Against a Stun Gun

Overview

- **What BPD Investigators Say.**
 - **Michael Kane.** On July 17, 2003, in an MSNBC [interview](#), Michael Kane heatedly disputed that the stun gun marks were burns, pointing out that the autopsy report referred to them as "abrasions."
 - **Tom Wickman.** On December 26, 2006, Carol McKinley conducted an exclusive Fox News [interview](#) with Tom Wickman, former BPD Detective and Grand Jury BPD representative. According to Internet poster [Koldkase](#), Wickman "said a lot of false information has gotten in the public about the evidence. He wouldn't specify, for obvious reasons, but [McKinley](#) brought up that the "stun gun" allegations are WRONG, that the BPD PROVED that the marks on [JonBenet](#)'s face ARE BRUISES, NOT STUN GUN INJURIES." In this version of the [interview](#), it is clear that Wickman is the source of this information, but McKinley merely asserts "he believes" the injuries to be bruises.
- **AirTaser Manufacturer View.** [AirTaser](#), the manufacturer of the stun gun that would have left markings most similar to those found on JBR's body, was skeptical that any stun gun could have been used without either creating much noise or causing JBR to scream in pain. An extensive interview with an [AirTaser](#) representative is found [here](#). Internet poster Margoo [speculates](#) this aired on MSNBC in July 2001.
- **Internet Posters.**
 - The most complete rebuttal to the stun gun theory has been provided by Internet poster Jayelles [here](#)
 - Internet poster [Tricia](#) also has posted a lengthy rebuttal to Judge Carnes' claims about a stun gun.
 - [The Ramsey Stun Gun Myth](#) purports to show that the spacing of the alleged stun gun marks is too small to have been caused by an [AirTaser](#).

Alternative Explanations for Stun Gun Marks

- **Burke's Train Tracks.** The 2016 CBS documentary suggested that the "stun gun" marks instead could have been created by the train tracks from Burke's train that was in the basement near the wine cellar room.
- **Marks Caused by Patsy Ramsey Rings?*** [Wolfmargirl](#) developed a theory that the stun gun marks instead were made by Patsy Ramsey's rings.
- DocG writes: The "stun gun" is a perfect example of the lengths to which Ramsey supporters must go when constructing their mystery intruder. Since there is no real evidence of any such person, it has been necessary to concoct evidence out of thin air. Anyone can take some marks from a photograph, shop around for something that seems to fit those marks, and then assert that the marks "must have been" made by that object. If Smit hadn't found a stun gun with the necessary measurements he'd have found some other object that filled the bill, something the Ramseys were unlikely to possess, such as a plumber's tool or maybe something only a dentist or optometrist might use. Anything that might prove useful in concocting a reasonable doubt defense. All the stun gun theory proves is that Lou Smit is NOT operating as an objective investigator but, on the contrary, a Ramsey advocate. What's most troubling about this whole issue is the way so many reasonable people have taken this absurd theory seriously, to the point of going to considerable trouble to "refute" it (see above). It's not worth refuting. Why bother? There IS no stun gun evidence, just a myth concocted to manipulate public opinion.