

Motivation for False Confession

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False Confessor Profiles

- Why would Karr falsely confess? A Website devoted to [false confessions](#) claims that false confessions can occur among all types of individuals (intelligent or not; mentally ill or not). Both [Newsweek](#) and [Time](#) have run stories on false confessions.
- **No Match to False Confessor Profile?** Most false confessions arise from individuals who seek out authorities, which Karr did not do; his "confession" transpired only after being confronted by Thai authorities. He was surprised and possibly angered to be caught. In the phone tapes, Karr seems quite paranoid about getting caught and claims he would kill himself rather than be caught. He also is heard sobbing on the tapes and sounds genuinely remorseful, another aspect not typical of a false confessor.
- **Other False Confessions to JBR Killing**
- **James Selby.** James Allen Selby was a convicted rapist who admitted in jailhouse letters to several other crimes, including Danielle vanDam and the murder of [JonBenet](#) Ramsey. See details at [acandyrose.com](#).
- **B_n_Jazzy4ever45.** This individual was an Internet poster who confessed at maketost.com, a JBR memorial site; see details at [acandyrose.com](#).

Mental Illness?

Character Profile

- **FBI View.** Internet poster [Shadow](#) claims to have an FBI source who asserts that "all of his FBI buddies are in agreement that the guy is mentally ill" and are surprised Boulder LE let the case get into the news before actually questioning Karr.
- **Formal Character Profile.** [Russell Smith](#), the [creator](#) of the BRACE Character Profile system, has posted a comprehensive personality assessment of Karr based on reading emails and listening to phone tapes. See [here](#). His overall assessment is as follows, but there is considerably more detail on the page cited:
 1. "Based on the current profile, John Mark Karr is predominantly a psychopath. There are no indications of psychosis and his behavioral dysfunctions are learned. All so-called psychopaths are antisocial in the sense that they willfully violate the rights of others, but at their core they are quite simply narcissistic --- acting-out their self-centered desires (both for pleasure/comfort and to avoid pain/discomfort), imposing their wills on others in the process. The significant negative correlations indicate that he is fiercely independent and assertive, is socially engaging and alert to social cues, generally has good communication skills, and is able to understand and relate to the verbal and nonverbal behavior of others. Similarly, he is able to relate to the emotions and motivations of others, both in terms of reflecting (role play, emulate) and eliciting (provoke, evoke)."
 2. "Psychopaths are independent creatures who only rely on others as a matter of practical necessity. In fact, they are attracted to the most naive, dependent individuals in their behavioral environment because they are so easy to manipulate and exploit. John Mark Karr has progressively been "attracted" to younger and younger females. He recently claimed his current preference is five to nine year old "little girls," but he may well progress to toddlers and infants. His current profile certainly indicates no social or moral taboos and he verbalizes little interest in normal sexual relationships."

Multiple Personality Disorder?

- Karr [possibly](#) may have had "multiple personality disorder" (MPD), which since 1994 has been called "[dissociative identity disorder](#)" (DID).
- However, Internet poster [Mikie](#) [claims](#) Karr instead had "factitious disorder" as such individuals "deliberately create or exaggerate symptoms or falsify behaviors for emotional gains."

Delusional

- Karr may be simply delusional, in which case the confession fulfills a deep psychological need. If he actually believes he is the killer, this would explain why his accounts and emotional trauma seem so convincing.
- Internet poster [Mikie](#) [suggests](#) Karr may have believed Patsy killed JBR accidentally and is deliberately taking the fall for her, although there is no indication from the emails or phone tapes that this is true. What is clear is that he thought he could save her from the false accusations being made by those who believed she was guilty.
- Dr. Michael Welnder, a forensic psychiatrist, provides his views on Karr's thinking [here](#).

Did Karr Inherit Mental Illness?

- Karr's mother [reportedly](#) tried to kill him as an infant and later was hospitalized for mental illness and has subsequently died in 2000. A friend of the family stated: "From the time his mother tried to kill him --- he's been out-and-out paranoid that someone's going to try and kill him or take advantage of him," [McCrory](#) said. "He needs a psychiatrist worse than anyone I've ever met in my life."
- It is [reported](#) Karr was fascinated by JBR's death and had written such a detailed paper about it in college that he was encouraged to turn it into a book. Skeptics believe this research and/or contacts with Tracey may explain his "insider" information.
- In this same time period, Karr was recorded by a California woman making very disturbing observations about JBR, further confirming his obsession.

Monetary Motivations

Ran Out of Money

- Some have further speculated that Karr ran out of money and wished to get his transportation back to the U.S. paid for.
- But this theory ignores his potential liability for misleading authorities and/or the prospect he could be confined to a mental institution were his behavior deemed a reflection of serious mental illness.

Seeking Medical Help

- Internet poster [VeritasOne](#) has [speculated](#) based on his gaunt appearance that he has AIDS and was seeking imprisonment knowing that the state would then be obligated to pay for his medical treatment.
- But this wouldn't explain why he waited to be caught rather than preemptively coming forward. There is no indication he "expected" to be arrested.
- Internet poster [Jayelles](#) has [pointed out](#) that no responsible surgeon would consider sex change surgery on an AIDS patient.

Celebrity Mania

- Karr, by all accounts, is very intelligent, notwithstanding his unusual sexual preferences. Once caught, he may have calculated the following: by confessing he immediately got his "15 minutes of fame." He also had to know the media would dredge up many of the details of a tragic life. The California pornography charges are a misdemeanor offense, so he'd serve a relatively short sentence at best, during which time he would write a book about the JonBenet case. Once released, his book would be a best-seller.
- Karr also clearly was thinking about making money from a movie in which he hoped that Johnny Depp would play his part [audio clip](#).
- Since he would not be profiting from a crime, he would be entitled to any proceeds from a book or movie deal.
- From things he has said, it would appear that he comes from the school of pedophiles who strongly believe that what they do is morally right and that children shouldn't be denied their "right" to have sex with adults who love them etc. His new-found celebrity would give him a bullhorn from which to promote his views: their very controversial nature virtually ensures an endless list of appearances on talk shows and "news" programs. He could easily afford his sex change operation. He'd have to give up little girls, but in the grand scheme of things, that was probably going to have to happen anyway due to "Megan's Law" notification requirements that would follow him wherever he went the rest of his days.
- MSNBC analyst Cliff Van Zandt [asserts](#) Karr got exactly what he was seeking from the intense media coverage watched by millions: his name will be forever linked with JBR's.

Why Sex Surgery Before Confession?

- Karr was seeking to have sex-change surgery, but taking such a drastic step is not consistent with planning to confess to this crime as it implies some serious degree of future-orientedness and plans for the future. It would seem pointless to undergo such surgery only to be placed on death row and/or life in prison.
- However, one could as equally argue that getting sex-change surgery in Thailand was his last chance since once imprisoned, that option would be forever closed to him.

Revenge on Tracey

- One possibility is that Karr was very upset by being turned in by Michael Tracey and now is playing a "game" to make Tracey look as bad as possible.
- Tracey has previously fingered a suspect who turned out to have a proven alibi, so this could considerably tarnish his image.
- Even though Karr had taken great pains for 10 years to remain hidden, once in the hands of Thai authorities, he in effect taunted Boulder authorities to take his confession seriously by [stating](#): "If you don't let me plead guilty, how will you feel? How will you live with yourself when I kill a little girl?"

Averting Thai Jail Time

- Some originally thought Karr was confessing to be extradited to the U.S. thereby avoiding the brutality of being jailed in Thailand.
- But it turned out that Thai officials would not have jailed Karr but for the American charges he was facing.