Witness: Abraham Robert Latham

Date: 2004-12-06

Proceedings held December 6, 2004

Called by: Defense

Phase: Penalty

Examinations: Direct – Pat Harris

Day 1 of 1 for this witness

Court: San Mateo County Superior Court, Redwood City (People v. Scott Peterson)

Source: https://pwc-sii.com/CourtDocs/Transcripts/LathamAbraham.htm

Page/line: not available (source HTML has no page or line markers)

Text below is verbatim from the source page for this date only.

Direct Examination by Pat Harris

HARRIS: Good morning, Abe.

LATHAM: Good morning.

HARRIS: You told me I could call you Abe, is that okay, for short?

LATHAM: Yeah, that's fine.

HARRIS: You're also the son of Bob Latham, is that right?

LATHAM: Correct.

HARRIS: And your sister we just heard from, Leeta?

LATHAM: Leeta.

HARRIS: Where did you fall on the scale as far as in the family?

LATHAM: Well, my other, Kelly and Michael, my younger sister and brother, they came a couple years after Leeta and I. So as far as growing up it was always John, Scott, Leeta and myself and I was the youngest of them all.

HARRIS: You mentioned Scott, how, what's the age difference between you and Scott?

LATHAM: I think it's like three, four years.

HARRIS: Where did you grow up?

LATHAM: In, primarily in Rancho Cucamonga.

HARRIS: Do you also have memories of growing up with Scott of going down and seeing him in San Diego?

LATHAM: I do. It was always, you know, a treat to go down to San Diego and visit, you know, the cousins and Aunt Jackie and Uncle Lee. It was always like a little vacation. I always looked forward to those trips.

HARRIS: You told me just some sort of, in many ways it was like a very special experience. If you would just share a couple of stories you told me about growing up with Scott.

LATHAM: Well, I mean, if I don't have cousins, well, I have actually quite a few cousins, but I never really met them until I was older so Scott and John were kind of my only real sense of family or an extended family. So it's just kind of learning what that meant, and, you know, and learning that these people were actually, oh, that we're related by blood. You know, kind of an

interesting thing when you're a child trying to figure out. So, you know, it was always like a very special friend. It was much more than a friend because it was a family member and,

HARRIS: I would ask you just to talk about, if you would, that sense of family, was there a lot of teasing going on?

LATHAM: Yeah, I mean, yeah, as far as kids tease each other, definitely, you know, John was always older, and, you know, would love to torment us and, you know, scare us with stories of, you know, giant squirrels hiding in the rocks behind the house. I think when things got out of control it was always Scott who would, you know, brought us back down to earth, really telling us there's no giant squirrels that were coming for us.

HARRIS: We also have heard stories of that sort of his generosity even at a young child, did you see that as well?

LATHAM: Absolutely. You know, like my sister just stated, he was always more than willing to share with us. And, you know, I remember one specific occasion going down to San Diego for a birthday. And I think it was my eighth or ninth and I had gotten a remote control car and the gift was the remote. And I couldn't quite figure out what the heck this thing was. And I think it was Scott was like, I'll show you and, you know, the remote control car came driving around the corner. And, you know, he's always willing to take the time to, you know, to hang out, play and, you know, be a friend, I guess.

HARRIS: As he got older you had, now did you stay here,

LATHAM: I did.

HARRIS: while your father went to Saipan?

LATHAM: I did.

HARRIS: And as you got older you continued to have meetings with Scott, you would see him at different family functions?

LATHAM: Like my sister said earlier, there was a period of, you know, five to six years we really didn't see, you know, the Peterson's or the other Latham's. But, you know, it's kind of weird when you remember somebody as a kid. You know, when you're a kid yourself and all of a sudden, you know, you're both adults, but it just takes a couple seconds to pick up right where you left off. So, yeah, we started seeing each other at family reunions, gatherings, weddings.

HARRIS: You used the phrase there wasn't a violent bone in his body, what did you mean by that?

LATHAM: Well, what I meant, mean by that I guess is exactly what you just said. There is not a violent bone in his body. I've never seen him react with any kind of anger or physical force or any, you know, anything that quite clearly, you know, we've been told otherwise.

HARRIS: Did you see a kindness in him?

LATHAM: Absolutely. I still do.

HARRIS: You still do?

LATHAM: Yeah, of course. This is the same Scott that I've known since I was a kid. You know, he's the same Scott that, you know, I went to the zoo with and learned what, you know, animals come from different continents and, you know, that monkeys climbing trees.

HARRIS: Would you say that Scott is a person who is a problem solver?

LATHAM: Yeah, I think that's a pretty general trait with most of our family. It's, you know, life, you know, has problems and rather than, you know, sit on them and, you know, spend weeks, you know, looking at them, you know, Scott, you know, looks for solutions and moves forward.

HARRIS: He wasn't someone who spent a lot of time just worrying about them, whining about them?

LATHAM: No, he's not a whiner.

HARRIS: You also got to see him, get to be with him after he had met Laci, is that right?

LATHAM: Hm-hmm.

HARRIS: What was your impression of their relationship?

LATHAM: Well, I mean, you know, anybody, you know, who meets Laci for the first time it's like, oh, my gosh here she is. She was just so full of life and, you know, Scott was, you know, had this glow. I mean, he met the love of his life and it was written on his face. And it was written on both their faces.

HARRIS: You, if you can tell me one other thing I'd like you to tell the jury and this has to do with Jackie. You used the word when you talk about your Aunt Jackie, you used the word "magical," what did you mean by that?

LATHAM: Aunt Jackie was always this, I mean just this fun, boisterous-like character, who, you know, as a kid it's like who is this woman. She's, you know, just full of life and love and, you know, always wants to teach you a new song or a new dance or show you, you know, new things and new places. You know, that's just kind of magical for me.

HARRIS: Did you see a lot of the same traits in her son Scott as you as saw in Jackie?

LATHAM: I do. I do. He's a product of Lee and Jackie, you know, he's a perfect, you know, product of the way they brought him up.

HARRIS: Thank you. That's all I have.