Witness: Sandra Bertram

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Called by: Defense

Phase: Penalty

Examinations: Direct – Mark Geragos

Day 1 of 1 for this witness

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

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Direct Examination by Mark Geragos

GERAGOS: Good morning, Miss Bertram. We asked you to come, to come and testify, called you up and asked if you would. Said you not only would, but you wanted to; is that correct?

BERTRAM: Absolutely.

GERAGOS: How is it that you know Scott Peterson?

BERTRAM: I worked for Chuck Courtney. I have worked for him since 84. I have known Scott since he was 12 years old. I knew his dad prior to that at another golf club that I worked at. So over the course of 30 years, I have known their family.

GERAGOS: Okay. Did you, you heard, I guess, Mr. Courtney testify that Scott worked there. Did he work with you?

BERTRAM: Yes. He worked out in the back room and did all the menial things that we'd have the kids do. And he was always a pleasure. Interesting, very smart young man.

GERAGOS: How well would you say you got to know him?

BERTRAM: Very well. Saw him daily.

GERAGOS: On a daily basis?

BERTRAM: Uh-huh. He would come to work at the shop. I knew him first when he was about 12 years old. He used to hang out at the golf shop. He and his dad would play golf in the evenings after Lee got off work. And he and Jackie would come over and they would all play golf in the afternoon. Jackie would shop a little bit. And I'm a buyer for the golf shop, and so we would visit and talk about family and kids, and got to know each other. And I, like I said, I knew Lee prior to that at another club I was at. It was really nice to see him be a member there when I moved to there, relocated.

GERAGOS: When you first met him, how long had you been at the club when you first met Scott?

BERTRAM: I would say probably almost immediately. Because I think I met Lee, I saw Lee the first day I came to work down there. And I was pleasantly surprised to see a familiar face.

GERAGOS: When he was hired, do you remember approximately how old he was? Was he in high school at that point?

BERTRAM: No. I do not, you know, I do not remember what age. We usually get them about 15, 16 years old. Probably about 16 years of age.

GERAGOS: What kinds of things do you remember about Scott?

BERTRAM: Only good things. I wracked my brain throughout this whole thing trying to think of one single negative thing, and I can't think of one single negative thing about this child or his family. I'm a mom. I have four children and I have five grandchildren. And you notice that about children, if they are good kids or bad kids, or arrogant kids, or what have you. Scott was a pleasure. He was always a pleasure. He's a very quiet kid. And so I'm gregarious, and I so used to draw that out of him sometimes. And I have heard the comments that he's non-responsive. Well, Scott Peterson is not non-responsive. He and his dad have had that personality where they are soft-spoken, quiet. And you pretty much have to draw the personality out of them.

GERAGOS: Does he, when he was working with you or for you, in the, doing these tasks, did he exhibit what you would characterize as positive qualities?

BERTRAM: Oh, absolutely. We always thought Scott would become something good and complete and wonderful.

GERAGOS: What kind of things did he do that you were impressed by a man his age?

BERTRAM: He was never angry. He always responded when we asked him to do something. He was always pleasant. He was so respectful of his parents. Any time I was around him, he was very respectful of me. And that's hard when you are the, I've always been the only woman in a situation of all men. And so, you know, the kids can pick up on kind of the male chauvinistic thing going on. Scott was never like that. He was always very kind, very considerate, and very respectful.

GERAGOS: When I talked to you about him yesterday and again today, you had mentioned that he, that he had a maturity about him?

BERTRAM: Always. It was like a young, you know, an old man in a young man's body. Yeah. Very sincere, very soft-spoken.

GERAGOS: Did he have a, was he arrogant?

BERTRAM: Never.

GERAGOS: Was he respectful towards others?

BERTRAM: Always.

GERAGOS: Did he defer to the authority, in the sense that if he was working for you or for Mr. Courtney, would he listen to them and both of you, as he was instructed?

BERTRAM: Yes.

GERAGOS: Is there, would you say that, at some point, even though there was a difference obviously in age, that you considered him to be a friend?

BERTRAM: Absolutely. Absolutely. I think I sort of take these kids under my wing. They work for us for a number of years, usually. And I have known most of them since they were, they were also kids. I see them grow up to be young professionals.

GERAGOS: Would you say that maybe he was even a little bit shy?

BERTRAM: Maybe he was shy. He was certainly quiet.

GERAGOS: Do you know why we're here today?

BERTRAM: Yes, I do.

GERAGOS: What the jury is being asked by the prosecution is to put him to death?

BERTRAM: Yes, sir.

GERAGOS: And do you have an opinion about that? Any reason why you think he shouldn't be put to death?

BERTRAM: I can't even imagine that happening. I do not believe that Scott is guilty of this crime. I don't believe that he could have done this. The person that I knew, the family that I knew, the child that I saw daily, he could not have done this. I do not want to see him put to death.

GERAGOS: Do you think that the jury's only choice at this point, because we're in what's called the penalty phase is, they only have two choices. They can either fix, they can say put him to death, or they can say life without the possibility of parole, which means he never sees the light of day. Do you think that if they choose either of those options, hopefully choose the option of life without parole, do you think that he would make a positive contribution wherever he is, wherever he's housed?

BERTRAM: Scott will always make a positive contribution no matter in what situation he's in. I think as the years go on, you are going to find that out.

GERAGOS: Do you have any doubt about that?

BERTRAM: I have absolutely no doubt about that. I wish I could do more, or could have done more.

GERAGOS: Thank you. I have no further questions.