

Chicago Tribune

New trial a possibility for convict in '86 killings

A Chicago man sentenced to life in prison as a teenager for a triple murder he contends he did not commit could win a new trial later this year after a decision Monday by a Cook County judge.

Judge Fred Suria determined that Jason Gray, now 32, would have a full hearing on whether he should receive a new trial for allegedly shooting into a basement party in the Marquette Park area in 1986. Gray allegedly threw open the door to the crowded room and open fire, killing three people and wounding a fourth.

Suria made his decision after hearing last week from the key witness in the case, a woman who was 13 at the time of the shooting in the 6300 block of South Washtenaw Avenue, who told the judge she did not remember whether she recognized Gray as the shooter. Defense attorney Jennifer Bonjean told Suria the uncertainty surrounding the witness should warrant a new trial.

Prosecutors argued the witness has not recanted her trial testimony. Gray will appear in court July 28 so the full hearing can be scheduled.