FIRST DIVISION
February 18, 2020

IN THE
APPELLATE COURT OF ILLINOIS
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT

PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS,	)	Appeal from the Circuit Court of
	)	Cook County, Criminal Division.
Plaintiff-Appellee,	)	
	)	
v.	)	No. 13 CR 1165601
	)	
JIMMIE DUNLAP,	)	
	)	Honorable
	)	Jeffrey Warnick,
Defendant-Appellant.	)	Judge Presiding.

PRESIDING JUSTICE GRIFFIN delivered the judgment of the court.
Justice Hyman and Justice Pierce concurred in the judgment.

ORDER

¶ 1 *Held*: Defendant's conviction for first degree murder is affirmed; the evidence was not so unreasonable, improbable, or unsatisfactory as to create a reasonable doubt of his guilt.

¶ 2 After a bench trial, defendant Jimmie Dunlap was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to 46 years in prison. The crime was horrific. Victim Deeondra Dawson was stabbed 81 times and died on the night of April 22, 1992. The case went unsolved for 20 years until DNA testing revealed the presence of defendant's DNA inside the victim's body and on the knife used to kill her. Defendant appeals his conviction, and claims he was not proven guilty beyond a

reasonable doubt. For the following reasons, we affirm the judgment of the circuit court of Cook County.

¶ 3 I. BACKGROUND

¶ 4 In the morning of April 23, 1992, victim Deeondra Dawson's four-year-old son walked out of his bedroom and found her lying naked on the floor in a pool her own blood. She had been stabbed 81 times and sustained a bite to her left cheek. A particularly gruesome wound was displayed on her neck; it measured six inches in length and three inches in width. This was a brutal murder.

¶ 5 A trove of evidence was collected from the scene of the crime, including a serrated knife with blood on it, and swabs taken from the victim's vagina and rectum. The knife was bent at a 90-degree angle, and a brown red crust had collected at the base of the blade near the handle. The knife was tested, and human blood was detected. Testing performed to the vaginal and rectal swabs from the victim revealed the presence of semen. Despite these evidentiary revelations, the case went cold for decades. In 2011, however, the case showed signs of life.

¶ 6 The evidence was retested using DNA analysis and a cross-check of the combined DNA Identification System (CODIS) revealed an association with defendant's DNA. An analyst asked police to secure a confirmatory DNA standard from defendant and on June 20, 2012, defendant voluntarily provided his DNA to detectives. Further DNA testing identified defendant's DNA on the victim's vaginal and rectal swabs, and on the knife recovered from the scene of the crime. Defendant was arrested on May 28, 2013, and charged with two counts of first-degree murder (720 ILCS 5/9-1(a)(1) (West 1992)). His case was tried before a judge.

¶ 7 A. Bench Trial

¶ 8 1. *Maurice Dawson*

¶ 9 Maurice was 27 at the time of his testimony and a graduate of the University of Chicago. On April 22, 1992, he was four-years-old and remembered taking a bath before he went to bed. Maurice woke up at some point in the night, walked outside of the bedroom and remembered being put back to bed by his mother. She told him not to come out of the bedroom again. Maurice saw a man in the apartment with his mother. They were "very close to each other" and it looked "like they were dancing." The next morning, Maurice came out of the bedroom and saw his mother on the dining room floor "in a pool of her own blood." She was naked. Maurice could not remember speaking with the police, but on cross-examination, stated that "whatever [he] said to the police when [he] said it was accurate."

¶ 10 2. *Commander Steven Goldberg*

¶ 11 Commander Goldberg testified that on April 23, 1992, he was an evidence technician assigned to gather evidence from the victim's apartment. He entered the apartment and found a deceased female lying on the floor in the dining room. There was "a good deal of blood around her" and he observed several pieces of a wooden fork that were broken and scattered throughout the apartment. Commander Goldberg photographed the scene. He observed blood in the doorjamb, the door frame inside of the apartment, around the lock, the deadbolt area of the apartment, the living room floor, the dining room, and in the bedroom, on the bedding. He swabbed the blood and preserved the swabs for testing.

¶ 12 Commander Goldberg also recovered a "serrated blade knife with blood on it" from the apartment. It was "bent at a severe angle." The knife was wrapped in a "blue colored sheet" on the floor in the living room. He found a pack of cigarettes and a disposable lighter sitting on a small table in the living room, and several other items, including a baseball hat with a "Georgetown

logo." Latent fingerprints were lifted from various locations in the apartment. When Commander Goldberg completed his duties, he called the medical examiner's office.

¶ 13 3. *Stipulated Testimony of Dr. Nancy Jones, M.D.*

¶ 14 The parties stipulated to the testimony of Dr. Nancy Jones, M.D., who performed a postmortem examination of the victim's body on April 24, 1992. She found that the victim had suffered a "bite mark of the left cheek" and "34 stab wounds and 47 incise wounds to the head, trunk and extremities." She took vaginal and rectal swabs from the victim and tendered them to the police. Based on her examination of the body, Dr. Jones concluded that the victim died from multiple stabs and incise wounds. The manner of death was homicide.

¶ 15 4. *Stipulated Testimony of Rodney Anderson*

¶ 16 The parties also stipulated to the testimony of Rodney Anderson, who conducted forensic biology analysis for the Illinois State Police Bureau of Forensic Sciences in June of 1992. Anderson analyzed the vaginal and rectal swabs from the victim for the presence of semen. The vaginal swabs tested positive for semen. He "observed some sperm cells that still had their tails intact, which is most often seen with a recent deposit of semen in the vagina." Anderson estimated that the semen was deposited "no longer than three days before her death." Semen was also identified on the rectal swabs, however, in a "lower amount." The vaginal and rectal swabs were preserved for future analysis.

¶ 17 Anderson also received and analyzed "one steak knife with a black plastic handle." The blade was "bent" and "it made a right angle with the handle." Anderson tested the knife, which exhibited "[r]ed-brown staining" on the blade and "smears along the length of the blade with the

heaviest crust where the blood met the handle." The knife tested positive for human blood. Anderson removed the stain and preserved the samples for future testing.

¶ 18 5. *Sergeant Jason Garner*

¶ 19 Sergeant Jason Garner testified that on June 20, 2012, he met with defendant for the purpose of obtaining his DNA. He told defendant that he was "investigating an Evanston cold-case homicide and the lab required a confirmatory DNA standard from him." Defendant was not placed in handcuffs or otherwise restrained, and was free to leave. Sergeant Garner showed defendant a photograph of the victim and he recognized her as Deeondra Dawson. Sergeant Garner then read defendant a "consent to collect biological evidence form" and he signed it, agreeing to provide his DNA. Another detective swabbed the inside of defendant's cheeks with two "Q-tips."

¶ 20 Defendant proceeded to have a conversation police. He admitted that he knew the victim but denied having sex with her or ever having traded the victim drugs for sex. Defendant did, however, admit that he sold the victim "weed," through his wife, Dana Dunlap. Defendant told police that he and his wife had been estranged for 23 years. After the meeting with police, defendant was allowed to leave.

¶ 21 6. *Wendy Gruhl*

¶ 22 Wendy Gruhl was a forensic scientist working in the biology and DNA section of the Illinois State Police. She was assigned to the victim's case in 2011, and reviewed the work performed by Anderson in 1992. Gruhl confirmed the presence of semen and "fully intact" sperm cells on the vaginal swabs collected from the victim. She concluded that the semen was a recent deposit, within three days, and explained that "[a]fter a deposit into a cavity such as the vagina,

one would expect that the person would be moving around and there would be drainage of the semen from the cavity." Over time, the semen and the sperm cells would "degrade" leaving "less semen and fewer intact sperm cells."

¶ 23 Gruhl testified that she examined the knife recovered from the scene of the crime. The knife was visibly "damaged, the blade was bent at approximately 90 degrees to the handle." She swabbed "the entire surface of the handle but not the blade" in order to "preserve any possible material that was based on touch rather than blood." Gruhl swabbed and tested the wooden fork recovered the scene of the crime, and received defendant's buccal swab. She preserved all the items for future analysis.

¶ 24 7. *Megan Neff*

¶ 25 Megan Neff was a forensic scientist working for the biology and DNA section of the Illinois State Police. Neff testified that she generated DNA profiles from the vaginal swabs taken from the victim. The profiles contained both human male and human female DNA. The female DNA profile matched DNA profile of the victim.

¶ 26 Neff cross-checked the male DNA profile with the "DNA database" and learned that the male profile was "associated to an individual by the name of Jimmie Dunlap." She "requested an additional standard form Jimmie Dunlap for confirmatory analysis" and later received defendant's DNA from the police. When she compared the DNA recovered form defendant's buccal swab, to the male DNA profile identified from the victim's vaginal swabs, they "matched."

¶ 27 Neff calculated a "frequency" for the purpose of estimating the "the chance a random person would have the human male DNA profile from the vaginal swabs of the victim." She concluded that "[t]he human male DNA profile from the vaginal swabs would be expected to occur in the approximately 1 in 17 quadrillion black, 1 in 18 quintillion white or 1 in 10 quintillion

Hispanic unrelated individuals." Neff clarified that a quadrillion has "15 zeros," a quintillion has "18 zeros" and there were only "7 Billion" people on the planet.

¶ 28 Neff also tested the rectal swabs from the victim using a "differential extraction." This "special extraction technique" allowed her to "separate out the sperm cells from all of the other cells in the sample." The process resulted in non-sperm, sperm and mixed fractions. Each fraction was profiled separately.

¶ 29 An analysis of the non-sperm fractions resulted in the identification of a human female DNA profile that matched the profile of the victim. Testing performed to the sperm fraction identified "a mixture of two people," but after "subtracting" the victim's DNA types from the mixture, Neff found a human male DNA profile that matched the DNA profile of defendant. A frequency calculation revealed that the human male DNA profile she identified "would be expected to occur in approximately 1 in 350 billion black, 1 in 19 trillion white or 1 in 17 trillion Hispanic unrelated individuals."

¶ 30 Neff tested the mixed fraction next and identified two people. She "separate[ed] out "a major and a minor contributor to the sample," and determined the gender of the major contributor was female and matched the victim's DNA profile. The gender of the minor profile was identified as male and matched defendant's DNA profile. Defendant "could not be excluded" from the minor male DNA profile identified in the mixed fraction. Neff performed a frequency calculation and estimated that "1 in 37 trillion black, one in 800 trillion white" and "1 in 840 trillion Hispanic unrelated individuals" could not be excluded from having contributed to the profile.

¶ 31 A test of the "crust" collected by Anderson from the inside of the bend of the blade near the handle of the knife in 1992, revealed a mixture of two DNA profiles: a major and a minor donor. The gender of the major donor was identified as female, and the DNA profile matched that

of the victim. The gender of the minor donor was identified as male, and when Neff compared it with the DNA profile of defendant, she determined that defendant "could not be excluded from having contributed to this minor human male DNA profile." She clarified that defendant's DNA was "included" in that profile. The chance that a random person would have the male DNA profile found on the knife was "[a]pproximately 1 in 2000 black, 1 in 2,700 white or 1 in 3,500 Hispanic unrelated individuals." An analysis of the handle of the knife revealed insufficient DNA for profiling.

¶ 32 8. *Dana Dunlap*

¶ 33 Dana Dunlap married defendant in 1989. She was still married to defendant at the time of her testimony. In April of 1992, she lived in an apartment with defendant and her two kids. The victim lived in the same building. Dunlap testified that she was friends with the victim and braided her hair before she died.

¶ 34 9. *Lisa Fallara*

¶ 35 Lisa Fallara was a forensic biology analyst in the DNA section of the Illinois State Police. Fallara performed "Y-STR DNA analysis," which generates a profile using only locations on the "Y chromosome" and "looks at male DNA only." Fallara tested the DNA samples taken from the knife and identified a mixture of two male DNA profiles; a major profile and a minor profile. The major profile was "complete" and matched the DNA profile of defendant. A frequency calculation estimated the chance that a random man would have the major male Y-STR DNA profile identified on the knife at "[a]pproximately 1 in 2,000 unrelated African American males, 1 in 2800 unrelated Caucasian males, and 1 in 1300 unrelated Hispanic males, based on a 95-percent confidence limit."

¶ 36 Fallara combined the results of the "traditional DNA analysis" performed by Megan Neff on the crust found inside the bend of the blade near the handle with the results of her "Y-STR

DNA analysis" of the same sample and generated the following frequency calculation: "[a]pproximately 1 in 4 million African Americans, 1 in 7 million Caucasians, and 1 in 4.5 million Hispanic unrelated individuals cannot be excluded from having contributed to the combined results of the minor human DNA profile identified" on the knife.

¶ 37 The minor DNA profile did not match the DNA of defendant. On cross-examination, Fallara confirmed that the DNA profiles of "two separate males" were found on the knife. She could not determine how long the DNA was on the knife and admitted that it could have been transferred from one surface to another.

¶ 38 10. *Detective Aaron Wernick*

¶ 39 Detective Aaron Wernick testified that he was assigned to investigate the "cold-case" murder of the victim in March of 2010. He had a conversation with Megan Neff in early 2012, and sent her the knife and seven pieces of a large decorative wooden fork that was recovered from the scene of the crime.

¶ 40 Detective Wernick secured a DNA sample from defendant on June 20, 2012, pursuant to Neff's request. He and Sergeant Garner met with defendant and asked him to provide a buccal swab standard. Defendant gave his consent to the DNA collection in writing, and detective Wernick swabbed the inside of defendant's cheeks with Q-tips. Defendant was allowed to leave.

¶ 41 Detective Wernick arrested defendant on May 28, 2013 at his residence. He placed defendant in a squad car and read him his *Miranda* rights. On the way to the Evanston Police Department, defendant made several statements that were caught on the squad "in-car" camera recording system. A recording device worn by Detective Wernick synched with the camera system and picked up the audio inside the car. Defendant repeatedly denied having sex with the victim

and denied ever being in the victim's apartment. Defendant was placed in an interview room at the police department and repeated his denials.

¶ 42 The State rested its case and defendant moved for a directed verdict. The motion was denied. The defense called former detective John Woodward as its first witness and defendant took the stand in his own defense.

¶ 43 11. *Detective John Woodward*

¶ 44 John Woodward was working as a detective for the Evanston police department in 1992. He interviewed the victim's son twice on April 26, 1992, and May 15, 1992. Maurice told Detective Woodward that he was at the apartment when a man came in "around 10:00 p.m." Maurice described the man as a "dark black male" who was wearing a Georgetown baseball cap. The man threw the baseball cap into the bedroom. Maurice had seen this man on two prior occasions. On cross-examination, Detective Wood stated that he had shown Maurice photos of his mother's acquaintances, but never showed him a photo of defendant because he was not a suspect in 1992.

¶ 45 12. *Jimmie Dunlap*

¶ 46 Defendant testified that he did in fact have sex with the victim on two occasions. The last time he had sex with the victim was "three days" before she was killed. They had sex in his car in a parking lot across the street from her apartment. Defendant testified that he did not kill the victim. On cross-examination, defendant admitted that he cheated throughout his marriage, "lied" to police and was married to Dana Dunlap when he had sex with the victim. The defense rested.

¶ 47 After closing arguments, the trial court offered a thorough explanation of the evidence and found defendant guilty of first-degree murder. The trial court stated: "[w]hat are the odds that [defendant's] fresh semen was found in [the victim's] bodily orifices, and, finally, that his DNA

was consistent and found to be within a statistical probability of one in four million on the knife? That is clearly beyond any reasonable doubt, and I have no doubt the defendant murdered Deeondra Dawson as alleged, and I find [defendant] guilty of murder in the first degree."

¶ 48 Defendant's posttrial motions were denied and the trial court sentenced him to 46 years in prison. Defendant appeals, and claims the State's proof failed to demonstrate his guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

¶ 49 II. ANALYSIS

¶ 50 When considering a challenge to the sufficiency of the evidence, a reviewing court must determine whether, viewing the evidence in the light most favorable to the State, any rational trier of fact could have found the required elements beyond a reasonable doubt. *People v. Newton*, 2018 IL 122958, ¶ 24. All reasonable inferences from the evidence must be drawn in favor of the prosecution. *Id*. This standard of review does not allow us to substitute our judgment for that of the fact finder on questions involving the weight of the evidence or the credibility of the witnesses. *People v. Hardman*, 2017 IL 121453, ¶ 37. We will not reverse the trial court's judgment unless the evidence is so unreasonable, improbable, or unsatisfactory as to create a reasonable doubt of the defendant's guilt. *People v. Newton*, 2018 IL 122958, ¶ 24. This standard of review applies to bench trials. *People v. Patterson*, 314 Ill. App. 3d 962, 969 (2000).

¶ 51 Defendant claims that the State's case was purely circumstantial and failed to establish his guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. His argument centers on the DNA analysis performed by Fallara and specifically, her testimony that the DNA of "two separate males" was found on the knife. Overall, defendant takes the position that the presence of another man's DNA on the knife and the lack of any eyewitness to the victim's murder adds up to reasonable doubt of his guilt. He emphasizes that having sex with the victim before her death was not a crime.

¶ 52 We have reviewed the record in this case and find there is no basis for reversing defendant's conviction. Stripped to its core, defendant's appeal asks us to reweigh the evidence and acquit him. We, however, do not retry defendants on appeal. Viewing the record evidence in the light most favorable to the State, we hold that a rational trier of fact could have found the essential elements of first-degree murder beyond a reasonable doubt. The evidence was not so unreasonable, improbable, or unsatisfactory as to create a reasonable doubt of the defendant's guilt.

¶ 53 The physical evidence presented by the State at trial established several facts from which defendant's guilt could be reasonably inferred. The victim was found naked lying in a pool of her own blood. The testimony of both Gruhl and Anderson established that the semen found in the victim's vagina was "fresh," and they concluded that it was deposited within three days of her death. Given Gruhl's testimony that she would have likely found "less semen and fewer intact sperm cells" on the vaginal swabs from the victim had she been "moving around" after intercourse, it could be reasonably inferred that the semen was deposited shortly before the victim's death. Gruhl also identified semen on the victim's rectal swabs. Based on this testimony, the trial court found that semen was "a very recent deposit."

¶ 54 DNA testing revealed that the semen found in the victim's body belonged to defendant. Neff compared defendant's DNA with the DNA found on the victim's vaginal and rectal swabs, and they matched. She ran a frequency calculation and determined that "the chance a random person would have the human male DNA profile from the vaginal swabs of the victim" was "1 in 17 quadrillion black, 1 in 18 quintillion white or 1 in 10 quintillion Hispanic unrelated individuals." A frequency calculation of defendant's DNA found on the rectal swabs produced a similarly high statistical probability.

¶ 55 Certainly, a rational trier of fact could conclude from the presence of defendant's DNA on the vaginal and rectal swabs of the victim (in the form of his recently deposited semen) that he had sex with the victim on the night of, or immediately before, her death. Defendant does not challenge this evidence and fails to meaningfully contest the reasonable inferences that flow from it. After denying it for years, defendant ultimately affirms in his brief that he had sex with the victim "three days before her death." Defendant does not challenge that evidence, and instead, takes primary issue with the additional physical evidence that tied him to this brutal crime; the results of the DNA analysis performed on the knife.

¶ 56 Defendant claims it is unreasonable to conclude that he committed the murder beyond a reasonable doubt because he was only *one of the two males* whose DNA was found on the knife. His contention is that the man whose DNA matched the unknown minor male DNA profile found on the knife was the culprit. After viewing the record in this case, we are not persuaded by this argument.

¶ 57 At trial, Neff testified that she performed a DNA test of the "crust" that collected on knife where the blade met the handle. She identified a minor male DNA profile and testified that defendant's DNA was "included" in the minor DNA profile. Stated another way, defendant "could not be excluded from having contributed to this minor human male DNA profile." Neff performed a frequency calculation and estimated that the chance that a random person would have the minor male DNA profile found on the knife was "[a]pproximately 1 in 2000 black, 1 in 2,700 white or 1 in 3,500 Hispanic unrelated individuals." These odds increased significantly after they were combined with the results of the Y-STR DNA analysis performed by Fallara.

¶ 58 Fallara conducted a "Y-STR DNA analysis" of the same crust found on the blade of the knife. She explained that Y-STR DNA analysis, as opposed to the "traditional DNA analysis"

performed by Neff, generates a profile using only locations on the "Y chromosome," which is "specific only to males." Fallara found two male DNA profiles on the blade; a major male profile and a male minor profile. The major male DNA profile was "complete," which meant that "there was no missing information." At each 11 locations she looked for a DNA type on the chromosome she "had a result." Defendant's DNA matched the major male DNA profile. Fallara performed a frequency calculation and estimated the chance that a random man would have the major male DNA profile she identified on the knife at "[a]pproximately 1 in 2,000 unrelated African American males, 1 in 2800 unrelated Caucasian males, and 1 in 1300 unrelated Hispanic males, based on a 95-percent confidence limit."

¶ 59 But critically, or as the trier of fact put it, "significantly," Fallara combined the results of her testing with Neff's "traditional DNA" test results and arrived the following, new statistical probability: "[a]pproximately 1 in 4 million African Americans, 1 in 7 million Caucasians, and 1 in 4.5 million Hispanic unrelated individuals cannot be excluded from having contributed to the combined results of the minor human DNA profile identified."

¶ 60 Defendant advances no persuasive or meaningful challenge to this combined statistical calculation and admitted at oral argument, that the relevant testimony of Fallara went "wholly unrebutted." He did, however, indicate in his brief that the State made "the numbers look better." But this claim is baseless absent any evidence to the contrary. Defendant's explanation as to how his DNA might have made its way onto the knife fares no better. Defendant alludes in his brief that his wife gave the victim the knife to cut a cake the day before the murder and he may have touched it. But there is no evidence to support this theory in the record.

¶ 61 We remain unpersuaded by defendant's argument that the lack of eyewitness testimony at his trial was fatal to the State's case. A criminal conviction may be based solely on circumstantial

evidence, which is defined as proof of facts and circumstances from which the trier of fact may infer other connected facts that reasonably and usually follow according to common experience. *People v. Brown*, 2013 IL 114196, ¶ 49; *People v. Castino*, 2019 IL App (2d) 170298, ¶ 19. It is not necessary that each link in the chain of circumstances be proved beyond a reasonable doubt. *People v. Fillyaw*, 2018 IL App (2d) 150709, ¶ 40. Rather, circumstantial evidence is viewed together to determine whether the evidence is sufficient to convict a defendant beyond a reasonable doubt. *People v. Gomez*, 215 Ill. App. 3d 208, 216827 (1991).

¶ 62 The circumstantial DNA evidence in this case paints a vivid picture and the lack of an eyewitness to the murder does not make it any less clear. But there is more evidence in this case that is not circumstantial in nature. At trial, defendant took the stand in his own defense and admitted to lying to the police about having sex with the victim, both before and after his arrest. The trial court made a credibility determination based on defendant's testimony and considered the false statements he made to police on June 20, 2012, before he was arrested as probative of his consciousness of guilt.

¶ 63 After observing defendant and hearing his testimony, trial court found that defendant had not "one iota" of credibility. The trial court noted that defendant's "lies" to detectives and "blasé" demeanor when confronted with his unfaithfulness caused irreparable damage to his credibility. In total, the trial court found that "the defendant's testimony was ridiculous."

¶ 64 The trial court also made a specific finding that defendant's misstatements ("repeated lies over the number of years") to police about not having sex with the victim was probative of his consciousness of his guilt. See *People v. Beaman*, 229 Ill. 2d 56, 80–81 (2008) (false exculpatory statements can be used as probative evidence of consciousness of guilt). We defer to the trial court's credibility determination and find no reason to upset its factual findings here.

¶ 65 We have considered the totality of the evidence in the light most favorable to the State and have drawn all reasonable inferences that flowed from the physical and testimonial evidence in the State's favor. We hold that a rational trier of fact could have found the essential elements of murder in this case beyond a reasonable doubt and the evidence was not unreasonable, improbable, or unsatisfactory. Accordingly, there exists no basis for overturning defendant's conviction.

¶ 66 Defendant remaining contentions do not change our minds. Defendant argues that the victim's son, Maurice, lacked credibility and the statements he made to police in 1992 raised reasonable doubt that he was the one who committed the crime. Defendant contends that he was not "dark skinned" as Maurice described the potential assailant to police. He also claims that Maurice "would have been able to identify [defendant] as the killer by name" if he was, in fact, the man Maurice observed "dancing" with his mother on the night of the murder.

¶ 67 Defendant invites us to retry him on appeal. This we cannot do. *People v. Collins*, 106 Ill. 2d 237, 261 (1985) (it is not the function of this court to retry the defendant). The trial court found defendant not credible and rejected these theories when it found him guilty of first-degree murder. *Hardman*, 2017 IL 121453, ¶ 37 (quoting *Jackson*, 232 Ill. 2d at 281) ("[i]n weighing evidence, the trier of fact is not required to disregard inferences which flow normally from the evidence before it, nor need it search out all possible explanations consistent with innocence and raise them to a level of reasonable doubt").

¶ 68 III. CONCLUSION

¶ 69 Based on the foregoing, the judgment of the circuit court of Cook County is affirmed.

¶ 70 Affirmed.