

Man acquitted of molestation

By Alex Wood

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A Hartford Superior Court jury Wednesday acquitted a Manchester man of accusations that he touched a 12-year-old girl in sexual ways, through clothing, in a single incident on June 21, 2014.

The jury of three men and three women took only about an hour at the end of the three-day trial to find the man, Jason T. Brady, not guilty of two counts of risk of injury to a child and a single count of fourth-degree sexual assault.

The two risk of injury counts were based on different subsections of the law, one carrying a mandatory minimum of five years in prison and a maximum of 20 years. The fourth-degree sexual assault count added five years to Brady's maximum exposure.

Brady, who is in his late 30s and listed an address on Newman Street in Manchester at the time of his arrest in March 2016, was free on a \$40,000 bond for most of the time the case was pending.

The girl told a "diagnostic interviewer" at the Children's Advocacy Center in Hartford in November 2015 that the incident occurred at Brady's former home on Hemlock Street in Manchester, a house he subsequently lost in a mortgage foreclosure, according to an affidavit by Manchester police Detective Andrew M. Young.

The girl said the incident occurred as she and Brady were watching movies together on a couch, while both also used their cellphones, after her brother and sister had left the room, according to the detective's affidavit. She said Brady smelled of beer and she thought he was drunk, the detective added.

Brady denied the accusations in a police interview and in trial testimony.

The first person the girl told about the incident was her boyfriend. His mother learned of the accusations and told the girl's mother, who subsequently questioned the girl and reported her accusations to police, according to the detective's affidavit.

In final arguments to the jury Wednesday, prosecutor Courtney M. Chaplin and defense lawyer Anthony Spinella agreed that the accusations came amid a long-running child custody battle between Brady and the girl's mother.

In his final argument, Spinella cited inconsistencies in what the girl has said on different occasions. The defense lawyer told the jury that the girl has given seven different versions of what happened.

The defense lawyer said Brady, by contrast, has given one version, consistently denying the accusations. He stressed that Brady "gave up every right he had" by submitting to a police interview and subsequently gave up his right to silence again by testifying at the trial.

Spinella also argued that the girl presented a very different picture of how she acted at Brady's house than other witnesses, including her sister and brother.

He said the girl described doing things like helping with her sister and brother, doing dishes, setting the table, and spending 2 1/2 hours watching Disney movies with Brady on the couch at the time of the incident. In contrast, the defense lawyer said, "everyone else said she stayed in her room and wouldn't come out."

“She’s taking this from a Disney movie,” the defense lawyer said of the girl’s account.

He said the girl didn’t like Brady and didn’t like going to his house because “he actually supervises her,” while he said the girl’s mother “did everything for her.” He said the girl’s accusations were reported to police Nov. 4, 2015, one day after a counseling session in which a decision had been made that the girl should spend time with Brady.

But Chaplin quoted the girl as saying that she loves and misses Brady. The prosecutor also questioned why the girl would make up a story in which she was subjected only to limited sexual touching, stopping short of the most intimate areas of her body.