The sentencing phase of the trial began Monday morning with testimony from Dr. Dale Watson, who suggested that Sowell may have suffered a brain injury following a 2007 heart attack.

By JAMES W. WADE III

Staff Reporter

Convicted serial killer Anthony Sowell twice began to cry Monday as a clinical psychologist described Sowell's home life and possible brain injury that could have impaired his judgment.

Sowell was convicted of murdering 11 women and burying their bodies at his Imperial Avenue home.

The sentencing phase of the trial began Monday morning with testimony from Dr. Dale Watson, who suggested that Sowell may have suffered a brain injury following a 2007 heart attack.

Watson performed a series of 45 to 50 tests over a period of 19 hours last December.

In one test, Watson found that it took Sowell considerably longer to reassemble a 10-piece puzzle while blindfolded and told the jury that it suggests Sowell has a moderate brain disorder. Another test showed Sowell had an 86 IQ.

He also quoted Sowell as telling him that he feels depressed and "sad most of the time and guilty over many things" he has done.

Assistant Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Rick Bombik suggested that "there could be a lot of reason that make a person depressed, but at least one of them could be being incarcerated for a year and being charged with 11 counts of aggravated murder."

Sowell's defense attorney John Parker promised the jury that they would hear testimony this week that would convince them that Sowell does not deserve to die for crimes, but should be sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

On the second day of testimony in the sentencing phase for convicted serial killer Anthony Sowell, three of his family members took the stand.

In July, Sowell was convicted on 82 of 83 counts, including aggravated murder, rape and kidnapping. Police found the bodies of 11 women decomposing in and around his Imperial Avenue house in October and November 2009.

Fifty-year-old Leona Davis and her siblings moved in with Sowell, his mother and his grandmother when she was 8 years old.

"I think I was about 10 or 11 and everything change. Like me and Anthony would fight all the time," Leona Davis said. "His mom would beat us all the time… We got tied up to a pole and she would beat us." Davis said she was sexually abused by Sowell, who is her uncle. He was only a year older than her.

Davis, her twin sister Ramona Davis and her brother Jesse Hatcher all said they were surprised to hear about the gruesome discovery on Cleveland's east side.

"I saw him on the TV, but I wasn't sure it was him," Davis said. "When I saw the house on the TV, I knew it was him… I was mad, but in a way, I was kind of happy that everything came out."

Hatcher, 48, is a half-brother of Leona and Ramona Davis, and lived on Page Avenue with Sowell and his mother.

"It was OK at the start, then things started changing. Beatings and punishments," Hatcher said. "It will happen with an extension cord or a water hose and we would lay over a chair. She would beat us until she drew blood or left marks."

Hatcher said that the girls were treated differently from the boys and that he was able to get away with more. Now, at age 48, Hatcher has four children between the ages of 4 and 22.

"I do not punish my kids. I do not beat my kids. I don't let anyone touch my kids." Hatcher said he ran away from that house and when he would return, his older brother would hide him in the basement. Years later, he said he went back to Claudia Garrison's house on Page Avenue. That's the same time Anthony Sowell got out of the Marines.

"He didn't like people touching his stuff… He had a certain way he folds his clothes from the military. Certain way he made the bed," Hatcher said.

It is unlikely that today's witnesses did anything to help Sowell's case. All three of them said they were abused by Sowell's mother, Claudia Garrison, but never saw Sowell abused. One of the women even testified that while she was 10 or 11 and Sowell being a year older, he raped her on a regular, almost daily basis. Will the jury sympathize with a person accused of raping his niece when he was 11 years old? The three witnesses also said that they never beat their own children, or used drugs or alcohol.