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D.A. BROWN: CUSTODIAN PLEADS GUILTY
IN 2003 FATAL THROAT SLASHING OF GIRLFRIEND AT JFK HOTEL

Faces 23 Years in State Prison

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that a Flushing man who worked as a custodian at the Courtyard Marriott near John F. Kennedy International Airport has pleaded guilty to killing his girlfriend in March 2003 by slashing her throat. The incident occurred at the hotel, where the victim was also employed as a front-desk clerk.

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Jorge L. San Pablo, 42, of 132-35 Sanford Avenue in Flushing, Queens. Appearing today before Queens Supreme Court Justice Robert J. Hanophy, the defendant pleaded guilty to first-degree manslaughter. Justice Hanophy set sentencing for July 20, 2006, at which time he indicated that he would likely sentence the defendant to 23 years in prison.

District Attorney Brown said, "The defendant has admitted killing the woman he supposedly loved by slashing her throat. The victim was a young mother whose two small children have been left to face life without her. Under the circumstances, the sentence to be imposed is more than warranted."

The District Attorney said the defendant admitted that he caused the death of Martha Diaz, 27, of Brooklyn Heights, inside the Courtyard Marriott at 145-11 North Conduit Avenue on the afternoon of March 9, 2003, by slashing her throat with a sharp instrument. The victim was discovered by hotel staff a short while later inside a basement custodial room with her neck cut. An anonymous phone call had alerted staff to check the basement.

Assistant District Attorney Brad A. Leventhal, Bureau Chief of the District Attorney's Homicide Trials Bureau, prosecuted the case under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Charles A. Testagrossa and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

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Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted at www.queensda.org.