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Release # 210-2006
www.queensda.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2006

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D.A. BROWN: ASTORIA MAN CONVICTED
OF FELONIOUS ASSAULT AND GUNPOINT RAPE OF EX-GIRLFRIEND
Faces Up To 32 Years In Prison

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that an Astoria man has been convicted of assaulting and raping his ex-girlfriend at gunpoint inside his home in July 2005.

District Attorney Brown said, "The defendant stands convicted of a heinous crime that began when he forcibly abducted his ex-girlfriend at gunpoint from her Bronx home and ended in a laundry room in Queens where he raped and tortured her with a lighted cigarette before threatening to kill her. If not for her sister's presence of mind to call 911, who knows what might have happened. Today's conviction ensures that justice has been done and that the defendant will be held accountable for a violent crime."

District Attorney Brown identified the defendant as Joseph Gentile, 35, of 21-60 46th Street in Astoria. The defendant was found guilty late yesterday afternoon of first-degree rape, second-degree assault and fourth-degree criminal possession of a weapon.

District Attorney Brown said that a jury of five men and seven women deliberated for more than four days following a two-week trial and returned a verdict of guilty before Queens Supreme Court Justice Richard L. Buchter who set a sentencing date of October 30, 2006. The defendant, who has been held on \$3 million bail, faces up to 32 years in prison.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to trial testimony, the defendant and a friend, Peter DiPiano, took a livery cab to his ex-girlfriend's Bronx home on the evening of July 29, 2005. Once there, Gentile approached the 23-year-old victim as she was sitting on her front porch and – displaying a .45 caliber pistol in his waistband – forcibly dragged her to the livery cab where DiPiano sat with a shotgun. The defendant then directed the livery cab driver to take them back to his Astoria residence, where he dragged the victim into the laundry room and forcibly raped her. Thereafter, he burnt her five times with a lighted cigarette on her left wrist and threatened to kill her.

According to the District Attorney, the victim was rescued when police received a 911 call from her sister who had witnessed the defendant dragging the victim into the cab. The defendant was arrested by police officers of the NYPD's 114th Precinct.

District Attorney Brown said that the defendant DiPiano 24, of 22-17 41st Street in Queens, was arrested in connection to the incident and pleaded guilty to fourth-degree criminal possession of a weapon before Queens Criminal Court Judge Robert Raciti on April 24, 2006. He was sentenced to a determinate term of one year in jail on June 26, 2006.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Cary O'Connor and Police Officers Joseph Faivus and Michael Tice of the New York City Police Department's 114th Detective Squad.

Assistant District Attorney John Carroll, of the District Attorney's Special Victims Bureau, prosecuted the case, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Marjory Fisher, Bureau Chief, Assistant District Attorneys Kenneth M. Appelbaum and Lucinda C. Suarez, Deputy Bureau Chiefs and Assistant District Attorney Frank P. DeGaetano, Supervisor, and 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: E-version of press release posted at www.queensda.org