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**D.A. BROWN: QUEENS MAN SENTENCED TO 27 2/3 YEARS TO LIFE IN PRISON
FOR 2003 VALENTINE'S DAY MURDER OF FIANCEE'S MOTHER**

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that a Queens man who represented himself at trial has been sentenced to 27 2/3 years to life in prison for the bludgeoning death of his fiancée's 57-year-old widowed mother on Valentine's Day in 2003. The murder took place inside the Jamaica residence they shared.

District Attorney Brown said, "The defendant had been convicted and now punished for the senseless murder of his fiancée's mother. Hopefully, those affected by this tragedy can find some degree of comfort knowing that justice has been done and that the defendant will be off the streets of Queens County."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Tony Sexton, 37, of 108-17 160th Street in Jamaica, Queens. Sexton, unemployed, was convicted last month of second-degree murder and tampering with physical evidence before Queens Supreme Court Justice Robert J. Hanophy who imposed today's indeterminate sentence of 27 2/3 years to life in prison and ordered the defendant to pay a \$5,000 fine.

The District Attorney said that, according to the trial testimony, the defendant had moved in with his fiancée and her mother, Maria Rogers, 57, into the co-op that they owned at 108-17 160th Street in Jamaica – despite the fact that Ms. Rogers did not care for her daughter's relationship with the defendant or the fact that he was moving into their home. On the morning of February 14, 2003, while his fiancée was out of town, the defendant became enraged with Ms. Rogers and struck her multiple times in the head with a blunt object, causing her death. Thereafter, the defendant cleaned the area with bleach and wrapped the victim's body in fabric taken from a piece of furniture in the home before placing her inside a plastic garbage bag. The following evening, the defendant placed the victim in her own car and drove the car approximately one mile away to 97th Avenue and 148th Street, where he abandoned it. Eight days later, police discovered the car with the victim's body inside.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Richard Johnson of the New York City Police Department's 103rd Precinct Detective Squad under the supervision of Lieutenant Sal Salerno, Commanding Officer.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Brad A. Leventhal, Chief of the District Attorney's Homicide Trials Bureau, 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 on www.queensda.org