



RICHARD A. BROWN
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY
QUEENS COUNTY**
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568
718-286-6000

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CONTACT: QDA PRESS OFFICE
(718) 286-6315

**D.A. BROWN: HUSBAND AND WIFE STRIPPERS PLEAD GUILTY
TO CHARGES STEMMING FROM RAPE OF MINOR TEENAGE GIRLS**

Used MySpace To Lure Girls To Apartment And Then Plied Them With Liquor And Raped Them

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that a married Corona couple who were arrested in January pleaded guilty today in connection with the rape of two young girls who they met through the social networking site MySpace.

District Attorney Brown said, "The defendants used the Internet to lure obviously troubled young girls to their apartment where they plied them with liquor and sexually assaulted them. The consequences of these assaults for the victims are profound and can well result in emotional trauma from which they may never recover. These guilty pleas allow justice to be done while sparing the young victims from the additional trauma of testifying at trial."

The District Attorney identified the defendants as Julio Rojas, 32, and Sophie Soto, 23, of 46-20 104th Street in Queens. The defendants pleaded guilty today before Queens Supreme Court Justice Daniel Lewis, who set sentencing for December 16, 2008. Rojas pleaded guilty to two counts of first-degree rape to satisfy two separate indictments filed in 2007 and 2008. His guilty plea covers a 2007 rape in which he used force to have sexual intercourse with a minor. It also covers a 2008 rape in which he had sexual intercourse with a minor rendered incapable of consent by reason of being physically helpless. He is expected to be sentenced to a determinate term of eight years.

Defendant Soto pleaded guilty to one count of promoting a sexual performance by a child for directing an underage teenage girl to take pictures of herself depicting the lewd exhibition of her genitals and directing her to send them to Soto through electronic communication. Soto is expected to be sentenced to an indeterminate sentence of two to six years in prison. Both defendants will be required to register as sex offenders.

District Attorney Brown said that the case came to light when the girls informed their parents and they went to authorities.

The investigation was conducted by the New York City Police Department's Queens Special Victims Squad (at the Queens Child Advocacy Center) and the NYPD's Major Case Unit of Vice Enforcement.

Assistant District Attorneys Charles J. Balvin and Stephen M. Dixon-Gordon, of the District Attorney's Special Proceedings Bureau, are prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Anthony M. Communiello, Bureau Chief, and Assistant District Attorney Oscar W. Ruiz, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Peter A. Crusco and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Linda M. Cantoni.

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