

*** NEWS RELEASE ***

SALINAS MAN FOUND GUILTY OF MURDERING MOTHER OF 6 WITH A KNIFE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Monterey County District Attorney Dean Flippo announced today that on Friday June 17, 2016 a jury found 38 year-old Florencio Anselmo guilty of First Degree Murder for stabbing his estranged girlfriend to death.

On July 4, 2014 Maria Ceja, a mother of 6, went out dancing with girlfriends to Mariano's club in Salinas. Her estranged boyfriend, Florencio Anselmo, went looking for her there. The two talked and danced for half an hour before she told him she no longer wanted to dance. Mr. Anselmo became upset and had to be escorted out by security.

Mr. Anselmo waited outside the club for Ms. Ceja for an hour, calling her multiple times on her cell phone and threatening to kill her. He then rode a cab to Ms. Ceja's apartment and hid in an unlocked van that Ms. Ceja owned. He waited in the van for 30 minutes. When Ms. Ceja arrived home, he exited the van, approached her as she sat in her driver's seat, and stabbed her twice in the chest with a folding knife. Both stab wounds perforated her heart.

Ms. Ceja's 12-year-old daughter ran to her mother's car after hearing her scream and found her bleeding from the chest. Ms. Ceja's 17-year-old son attempted to stop the bleeding and called 911. Ms. Ceja died shortly thereafter at the hospital as a result of those stab wounds.

Mr. Anselmo was arrested the following day and was interviewed by Salinas Police Detectives Rodolfo Roman and Gabriel Gonzalez. Mr. Anselmo led detectives to the murder weapon and confessed to the crime. At trial, the defendant claimed that he suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) due to child abuse and that the PTSD caused a general destabilization of his mental state.

The case was investigated by Salinas Detectives Dale Fors, Rodolfo Roman, and Gabriel Gonzalez as well as Monterey County District Attorney Investigator Christina Gunter. Mr. Anselmo will be sentenced on July 28, 2016 by Monterey Superior Court Judge Carrie Panetta. He faces a minimum sentence of life without the possibility of parole in state prison.