

## **Murder, Rape Charges Dropped in Irvine Woman's Death**

By Jeanne Wright

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Murder and rape charges have been dismissed against a man who was arrested last year for the slaying of an 18-year-old Irvine woman. Central Municipal Court Judge C. Robert Jameson dismissed the charges against Gregory Jesus Gonzalez on Friday after results of blood and semen tests excluded him as the woman's attacker.

Authorities believe that the same person or persons who raped **Janelle Lisa Cruz** also killed her.

Gonzalez, 21, of Garden Grove, was charged with raping and bludgeoning **Cruz** on May 5 at her mother's home in Irvine's Northwood Village. A real-estate agent discovered **Cruz's** nude body while showing a prospective buyer the home. Gonzalez, who has been held in the Orange County Jail for the past eight months, was arrested for the murder after he twice confessed to the crime to an acquaintance. The District Attorney's Office initially was seeking the death penalty against Gonzalez.

Deputy District Attorney Rick King said Gonzalez later recanted both confessions.

Defense attorney George Peters said his client made the confessions because he has emotional problems. King told the judge that Gonzalez has spent time in a mental institution and that he met the victim there. Peters said both Gonzalez and the victim were being counseled for emotional problems but had not seen each other in a few years at the time of **Cruz's** death.

Gonzalez still faces charges of assault and burglary in connection with an attack against a former girlfriend that occurred the night before **Cruz** was killed, King said.

He remains in jail on \$25,000 bail.