

YOU ARE HERE: LAT Home → Collections → Sentencing

Advertisement

## Clinic Operator Sentenced for Murder : Courts: Alicia Ruiz Hanna did not try to help a woman who died during an illegal abortion. Judge calls behavior 'callous.'

January 28, 1995 | RENE LYNCH | TIMES STAFF WRITER

SANTA ANA — A former clinic operator convicted of murdering a patient during an illegal abortion was described Friday as "callous and self-serving" by a judge who sentenced her to more than 16 years to life in prison.

Alicia Ruiz Hanna, 33, had limited medical training but posed as a physician and performed abortions at her Santa Ana clinic. She was convicted of second-degree murder and performing illegal abortions after a patient suffered a seizure on the examination table and died in January, 1993.

Orange County Superior Court Judge Everett W. Dickey said Hanna's "callous and self-serving" nature was shown when she failed to try to save Angela Nieto Sanchez's life. Hanna also refused to allow an assistant to dial 911, because she feared her illegal abortion work would be discovered.

"When it became obvious to everyone (the victim) needed medical help, (Hanna) didn't pick up the phone," Dickey said. "She'd rather save herself than Angela Sanchez."

---

### FROM THE ARCHIVES

Handful of Abortion Clinics Put Poor at Risk

*April 5, 1998*

Doctor Arrested After Abortion of 26-Week Fetus

*March 21, 1998*

SOCIAL ISSUES : Abortion Clinic Attacks Cast Glare on New Group of Extremists : Andrew Burnett's coalition advocates, or at least tolerates, violence. But he denies any links to East Coast shootings.

*January 17, 1995*

Abortion Opponents Rush Wichita Clinic; 130 Arrested : Protest: Activists scale fence, knock down counterdemonstrator. Two Operation Rescue leaders are taken into custody later.

*August 21, 1991*

Self-Help Kit Gives Women Control of Their Abortions

*November 19, 1989*

Sanchez, 27, had gone to Hanna's clinic for an abortion. As two of Sanchez's four children sat in the waiting room, she died after reacting violently to an unknown drug injected by Hanna in preparation for the procedure.

Hanna told the children that their mother had left without them, according to testimony. The children waited around most of the day, hoping for their mother's return, until a relative picked them up and began a citywide search for their mother.

When they returned to the clinic in hope of finding Sanchez, they found Hanna trying to stuff Sanchez's body into a car trunk, according to testimony. Deputy Dist. Atty. Rick King said Hanna had made plans to dump the corpse in Tijuana.

During a sentencing hearing, a representative of the victim's family read letters from Sanchez's mother and daughter describing how their lives have been shattered since the death.

"I'm destroyed emotionally. I will never forget these horrible crimes," said Maria Sanchez, the victim's teen-age daughter.

King asked the judges for the toughest sentence, arguing Hanna showed a "conscious disregard for human life." At trial, King told jurors Sanchez might have lived if Hanna had sought help; a fire station staffed with medical emergency workers was less than a mile away.

---

### MORE STORIES ABOUT

3/20/2020

Clinic Operator Sentenced for Murder : Courts: Alicia Ruiz Hanna did not try to help a woman who died during an illegal abortion. Judge c...

Sentencing

Deputy Public Defender Steve Biskar asked the judge to reduce the murder charge to a less serious charge of involuntary manslaughter because Hanna never intended to kill.

Murders -- Orange County

Abortion

Hanna was convicted of second-degree murder and attempting to perform an illegal abortion on Sanchez and of two counts of performing illegal abortions on other women.

Murders --orange County

Dickey sentenced her to 15 years to life in prison on the murder charge and an additional 16 months in prison on the abortion charges.

**MORE:**

Seizure Led to FloJo's Death

His 104 scores make his case

Restaurant review: South Beverly Grill

Brutal Murder by Teen-Age Girls Adds to Britons' Shock

Comaneci Confirms Suicide Attempt, Magazine Says