

Handout #1

**Sample Case: A Father-in-Law Was Killed by His
Daughter-in-Law When He Attempted to Rape Her**

Source: Zhu, Qingqi (Chu, Ch'ing-ch'i,) *Xing'an huilan* [Conspectus of Legal Cases], reprint of the 1886 edition. Taipei: Cheng wen chubanshe, 1968.

Xing'an huilan, Vol. 53, 2a-4b. The case is cited in an 1830 memorial, and it became a precedent in the Qing penal code. (The information here is extracted from two rape cases, both of which cited Woman Xie's case as precedent).

“...Your servant recently read the Beijing Gazette [which reported court affairs such as personnel, new laws and precedents], and found a precedent regarding Woman Xie, who is a commoner from Liuba, Shaanxi Province. Woman Xie resisted an attempt by her father-in-law, Lin Guoheng, to rape her.... She is of the Lin family and is the wife of Lin Xueyong, who works as a hired laborer and was not at home when the crime took place. While her husband was away, Woman Xie's father-in-law, Lin Guoheng, snuck into her bedroom in the middle of the night. Once inside, he locked his arm around Woman Xie's neck and pulled down his underwear. When his penis was exposed, Lin ordered Woman Xie to have sex with him. At this point, Woman Xie was in a situation where she wanted to escape but could not, and where she wanted to obey her father-in-law but should not. The situation was extremely urgent and Woman Xie was within moments of having her chastity permanently stained. Desperate and with no other options, Woman Xie picked up a shaving knife that was lying nearby and cut off Lin Guoheng's penis. He died of the injury.”

Cast of Characters:

Woman Xie: The wife of Lin Xueyong and the daughter-in-law of Lin Guoheng. She is the victim of the attempted rape by Lin Guoheng, her father-in-law, and is the defendant in this murder case.

Lin Xueyong: The husband of Woman Xie and the son of Lin Guoheng. Due to the struggling economic standing of the Lin family, he must work as a hired laborer away from home.

Lin Guoheng: The father of Lin Xueyong and the father-in-law of Woman Xie. He attempts to rape Woman Xie and is subsequently fatally wounded.