

Even though Wiatt gets tired of having to deal with "ridiculous" offenses, he says he feels very fortunate that he doesn't have to handle too many of the more serious crimes, such as robbery, assault, rape and murder.

"Assault cases usually involve roommate or boyfriend/girlfriend disputes," he says. "As far as rape goes, this is something I've contended with, with a number of organizations and people on campus. It's even been said that I have been covering up the 'rampant rapes that occur nightly throughout this campus' because I don't want the blemish to appear. Well, I always throw up my background."

And quite a background he has.

Wiatt, originally from Cincinnati, Ohio, served two years in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He received a bachelor's degree in business

"For someone to come out with the accusation that rapes are occurring and not being investigated, or that 'Wiatt is putting them in deep slumber,' is extremely erroneous and most offensive to me personally," he says.

"What you have to look at is the reluctance on the part of the victim to come forward in this particular type of offense."

Wiatt says a victim might not come forward for fear of being "bullied" by the defense attorney.

"This could happen to a degree, but it is considerably lessened with a new law prohibiting a defense attorney from exploring the sexual background of the victim," he says.

Another change made in the Texas Penal Code in 1983 is the replacement of the term "rape" with the phrase "sexual assault."

"The applicability of that means that a male can also be sexually assaulted," Wiatt says. "Also, it puts it in the more proper vernacular of what the crime consists of, and that is assault. It is an assault where sex resulted."

"And, with this new name, the stigma is now off of the victim and more to the violator because it is recognized by everybody that the victim is totally not involved other than perhaps a lack of prudence on her part, getting into a dangerous situation."

"This offense exists if the victim says one word — no. She can be a person of loose morals. She could have had all kinds of promiscuity with the subject in the past. But, if she says no tonight, that's it."

According to Wiatt, only three rapes were reported in the last two school years. All occurred in the dorms, and all were date rapes.

"They made a report to us," Wiatt explains. "We accepted it and were ready to process it and obtain an arrest warrant and then the victim came in, in two cases with parents, and said 'Hey, we don't want to get

pursued. Dr. Charlene Muehlenhard, assistant professor of psychology at A&M, has studied the date rape issue and has found some surprising statistics.

"In one study, we looked at unwanted sexual activities in a dating situation," she says. "Unwanted sexual activity ranged from unwanted kissing to sexual intercourse."

"It was found that 77.6 percent of the women and 57.3 percent of the men had been involved in some form of unwanted sexual aggression. And we found that 14.7 percent of the women and 7.1 percent of the men had been involved in unwanted sexual intercourse."

"Now, most of that was not violent, although some of it was. Most of it was the type of situation where the victim said no and the violator did it anyway."

Muehlenhard says one study conducted in California revealed that only 1 percent of date rapes are ever actually reported. This helps explain the low number of rapes reported on campus, she says.

"Whatever is reported is a vast underestimate of what is actually happening," she says.

Another surprising fact: date rapes usually *do not* occur on the first date.



"That's the stereotype, but that's not the case. With all types of sexual aggression in our study, they had known each other on the average for almost a year."

Muehlenhard says advice for the prevention of date rape is not the standard advice usually seen in rape prevention pamphlets. Warnings like "keep your shades drawn" and "keep your door locked" don't make



"For women, my advice is to be very clear about what you want and what you don't want," she says. "If a man asks or makes an advance, say no. If he doesn't take no for an answer, don't worry about making a scene or being ladylike."

"The things that seem to be effective based on a study we did here are to use physical force, scream, yell, try to get away and try to attract attention."

"In a date situation, it's probably a good idea to tell the man 'this is rape and I'm calling the police,' and then do it."

"In general, a lot of women are surprised when it happens, because it doesn't fit the stereotype of rape. They think that maybe it's their fault, that maybe they led the guy on."

"So, be aware that it can happen and if it does, don't be afraid of making a scene."

Muehlenhard's advice for men is, if a woman says no, chances are she really means it. If he does not stop, he is committing the act of rape and could end up in jail for it.

"Also, for men, be aware of becoming excessively intoxicated," warns Muehlenhard. "Evidence is pretty strong that alcohol decreases men's inhibitions against rape. Usually this advice about drinking is given to women, but I'm giving this advice to men."

"The problem with advice about rape is that a lot of times it's put solely on the woman's shoulders. They say, 'don't go to a man's apartment, don't drink, don't do this, don't do that.' I'm saying, let's give this advice to men."