NCJRS

OCT 5 1978

ACQUISITIONS

SOME VARIATIONS IN PUBLIC ATTITUDES ABOUT RAPE
BY ETHNICITY AND SEX*

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INTRODUCTION

The women's movement* has in the past decade made rape a public issue. Feminists have succeeded in transforming a heretofore personal problem into a social symptom - that is, defining rape as symptomatic of a sexist, violent society. Through a variety of media presentations; the wide dissemination of books such as Brownmiller's, Against Our Will; highly publicized trials such as that of Inez Garcia; the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women; International Women's year resolutions; as well as the continuous lobbying and educational efforts of women's groups in general, rape is no longer just a personal problem of the victim. The women's movement has served a consciousness-raising, educational function for the public. Rape is now a social issue and consequently so is its definition.

The legal definition of rape is very similar in all states: Rape is sexual penetration of a woman by a man not her husband without the woman's consent. Most statutes also clarify that consent may not be induced by terror, threat or mistaken identity. The legal definition of rape is simple. However, prejudice, stereotypes about rape victims, difficulties in obtaining legally admissible and convincing evidence, and precautions to protect the accused result in a working legal-judicial definition of rape which is much more re- strictive than the language of the law implies(Weiss and Borges, 1973).

It has been the author's experience in several years of working with community peer support programs for rape victims, that police and prosecutors readily admit that the cases they see successfully adjudicated are "good rapes." A good rape involves: (1) a noncontroversial victim (i.e., her reputation and/or activity are not in question); (2) an assailant who is a stranger to

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*The term women's movement is used here in a generic sense to refer to the increasing feminism and move for sexual equality which has been underway in America most recently since the mid-sixties. The term does not refer to any particular group(s) or organization.

the victim; and (3) an element of violence - preferably a weapon and injury. This working definition of a good rape shows up in a number of ways in the legal-judicial system which a victim must face when she reports a rape. The police, for example, use the term "unfounded rape" and the FBI crime statistics report the percentage of rapes "determined by investigation to be unfounded" (19 percent in 1976). The term implies that rape did not occur; what it means in day-to-day police work, however, is that the police for various reasons cannot or will not recommend prosecution. Gager and Schurr point out that police "unfound" rapes for a variety of reasons: a prior relationship between victim and offender; threat or force without accompanying battery; destruction of physical evidence; the victim had been drinking or was engaging in "questionable" behavior such as hitchhiking or visiting a bar unescorted. The "unfounded rape" is defined by prosecutorial difficulties, not by false charges (1976:132-133).

Carol Bohmer interviewed 38 judges in the Philadelphia Court system and found that they too had a concept of the "good rape," based on the credibility of the victim. The judges categorized rape cases as one of three types: (1) Genuine Victims: the "stranger leaping out of the shadows of a dark alley situation;" (2) Consensual Victims: the complainant was seen as "asking for it" regardless of whether it was legally rape (the bar pickup was used as a stereotypic example); (3) Vindictive Females: the alleged rape was seen as totally consensual sex or as fabricated for the woman's own idiosyncratic, vindictive purposes (1977).

Many prosecutors apparently believe that their working definition of rape is a reflection of public attitudes because they contend that they must have a "good rape" or the jury will not convict. Available research on public attitudes about rape is very limited. Klemmack and Klemmack surveyed 208 females over the age of 18 in Tuscaloosa, Alabama in an exploratory study of the

congruency between legal and social definitions of rape. They found current normative definitions of rape inconsistent both internally and in relation to the legal codes. For the most part, the respondents were found more conservative in their defintions of rape than the legal code, but perhaps not more conservative than the legal working definition of rape, although this was not dealt with. The only consensus found by Klemmack and Klemmack involved cases where the victim and the assailant were total strangers and where the victim apparently had no control over the situation. No males were included in the sample and no mention was made of racial differences (1976).

In a criminal justice analogue experiment, Jones and Aronson attempted to test the "just world" notion of undergraduate college students and found that the more "respectable" a person was, the more likely she would be seen as having caused her own rape. Such academic experiments, however, may have tenuous generalizability and these findings are contradictory to most of what is known with regard to public attitudes about rape in the real world (1973). The Harris Survey recently included several questions about rape and the prosecution of rapists. The findings indicate strong public sentiment that rape is a violent crime and should be treated as such. Although a significant portion of respondents were critical of women's behavior and dress, they still felt that permissive behavior on the part of females did not excuse a rapist for his crime (1977).

While the women's movement has served a consciousness-raising function for the public about the issue of rape, it might be expected that the greatest impact has been on white middle class women because the movement has been, and is still, primarily white and middle class (Staples, 1973:161-182; Decker, 1975:361-364; Schur, 1976:135-142). However, whether white, middle class women manifest more liberal-feminist attitudes about rape than other groups because they are "liberated" or sensitized by the women's movement, is still

an empirical question. If the Anglo population, especially the middle class
Anglo population, is more likely to be familiar with the issue or rape, minor-
ities are more likely to be experientially familiar with the problem of rape,
and for two reasons their attitudes may vary significantly by ethnicity and sex:
(1) Minority women are at risk populations because they live disportionately
in high crime areas. A survey of crime victimization in 1972, revealed one
third more Black rape victims than white (Hindelang and Davis, 1977:91). (2)
Minority men are disportionately arrested for rape. According to the FBI crime
reports, Blacks comprised 53 percent of all arrests for rape nationwide in
1976 while comprising less than 11 percent of the population.

While there is some data on the subject of rape and race (See for example,
Brownmiller, Ch. 7), very little has been written, and limited data exist, with
regard to Mexican Americans and rape. Most cities do not categorize Mexican
Americans separately in crime statistics because they use racial categories.
Other data from this research project, however, suggest that the phenomenon of
rape has a very different cultural meaning, and that its impact on victims may
be more traumatic, in the Mexican American community as compared with Anglo and
Black communities. Differentials in sex-role socialization, experience with
rape, attitudes about the criminal justice system, and involvement-exposure
to the women's movement suggest that any preliminary effort to formulate a
public definition of rape should take into account ethnic-sex differences.

There is little theory or empirical data to generate hypotheses, and
measurement of such an emotional topic as rape is problematic. In the limited
empirical data available there is some indication that the public also has
a working definition of a "good rape" and that police and the judiciary may
simply attempt to operationalize that definition. This work - which is part
of a larger study dealing with sex roles and attitudes about rape - is an

exploration of public attitudes about rape and is, at best, a crude attempt to measure these attitudes. The data reported here represent only one limited portion of the total research and the analyses are preliminary as attitudinal data are examined only in terms of ethnic and sex differen.es; obviously more sophisticated analyses based on socio-economic differences remain to be done. The purpose of this paper, however, is to test whether any consensus on rape exists across sex and ethnic categories. Is there a "good rape" on which all can agree?

METHODOLOGY

Samples

Samples were drawn to allow for comparisons between and among three autonomous samples of Anglos, Blacks and Mexican Americans. Three equal-size samples were drawn (by house number from the latest City Directory) from the most heavily concentrated Anglo, Black, and Mexican American census tracts in the city of San Antonio, Texas.* Within the three samples, males and females were almost equally represented; 335 Anglos, 336 Blacks, and 340 Mexican Americans were interviewed-in person by an interviewer of the same sex and ethnicity.

Measurement of Attitudes About Rape

Measures of attitudes about rape were three-dimensional, based on responses to a series of scenarios. Respondents were shown a series of nine cards, each containing a brief description of a forced sexual encounter. The words "case" or "rape" were not used in order to avoid suggesting police cases. The

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*The composition of the city (52.2 percent Mexican American, 39.2 percent Anglo, 7.6 percent Black, and one percent other) made it necessary to draw a sample stratified on the basis of race-ethnicity rather than drawing a simple random sample of the city.

forced sexual encounters ranged from a violent stranger-to-stranger assault to a husband-wife assault. With the exception of the husband-wife encounter, all scenarios met the legal definition of rape; they were varied, however, in terms of the reputation of the victim, circumstances of the assault, use of a weapon, injury, and relationship between the victim and the assailant. For the research reported here, six of these scenarios will be used to examine the public's definition of rape.

Respondents were asked to read each scenario (they were read to them in some cases) and subsequently to respond to three questions or statements designed to elicit a definition of the situation, an assessment of female fault, and the tendency to prosecute the alleged assailant. First, each respondent was asked to select one of the following responses: (1) I strongly agree that this is rape; (2) I agree that this is rape; (3) I disagree that this is rape; (4) I strongly disagree that this is rape. In the second dimension, respondents were asked to decide if the female involved was: (1) not at all at fault; (2) somewhat at fault; (3) very much at fault. Third, respondents were asked to give their opinion about whether the man involved should be "arrested and taken to court" (prosecuted). Responses on this question were the same four agree-disagree items listed above. Responses were scored as they are enumerated above (from 1 to 3 or 4). Low scores on the scenario items are indicative of liberal-feminist attitudes about rape: this was a rape (all were legally except the husband-wife rape which is very much a feminist issue right now); the woman was not at fault, and the man should be prosecuted.

FINDINGS

On Defining Rape

Stranger-to-Stranger Popular Rapes

Two of the scenarios describe the classic, popular version of rape where

a young woman is assaulted on a dark street by a stranger. The woman's behavior is not questionable since she is on the street for a legitimate reason, on her way home after having worked late at the office. In Scenario 1, the stranger carries a gun and leaves his victim injured; in Scenario 2, neither weapon nor injury is involved.

Scenario 1:   A young woman in her mid-twenties was required to work late at night in a dark and deserted part of town. As she left her office to go to the bus stop, she was attacked by a stranger with a gun. She was dragged into an alley where she was beaten and forced to have sex with him. Later, a night watchman found her unconscious. (Popular rape: weapon-injury)

Scenario 2:   A secretary in her late twenties had to work late at night in a deserted part of town. As she walked from the office to her car after work, she was stopped by a stranger who demanded that she follow him into an alley. There, he forced her to have sex with him. He then told her to stay where she was and he ran away. A night watchman found the woman, frightened and dazed but otherwise unhurt. (Popular rape: No weapon-No injury)

If any consensus exists among the public(s) with regard to what constitutes rape, it should be evident in response to Scenario 1. As can be seen in Table 1, although all mean scores are low, indicating belief that this is, in fact, rape, the three ethnic groups differed significantly in defining the situation. The mean scores range from an Anglo low to a Black high. Broken down by sex, both Black and Mexican American males and females differ significantly in their responses, females in both groups being more inclined to define the situation as rape. Group contrast t values in Table 2 indicate that differences among the three ethnic groups are largely attributable to male responses - that is, Anglo males differ significantly from both Black and Mexican American males with Anglos being the more likely to define the situation as rape. Only Black and Mexican American females differ significantly, with the latter group more likely to define the encounter as rape.
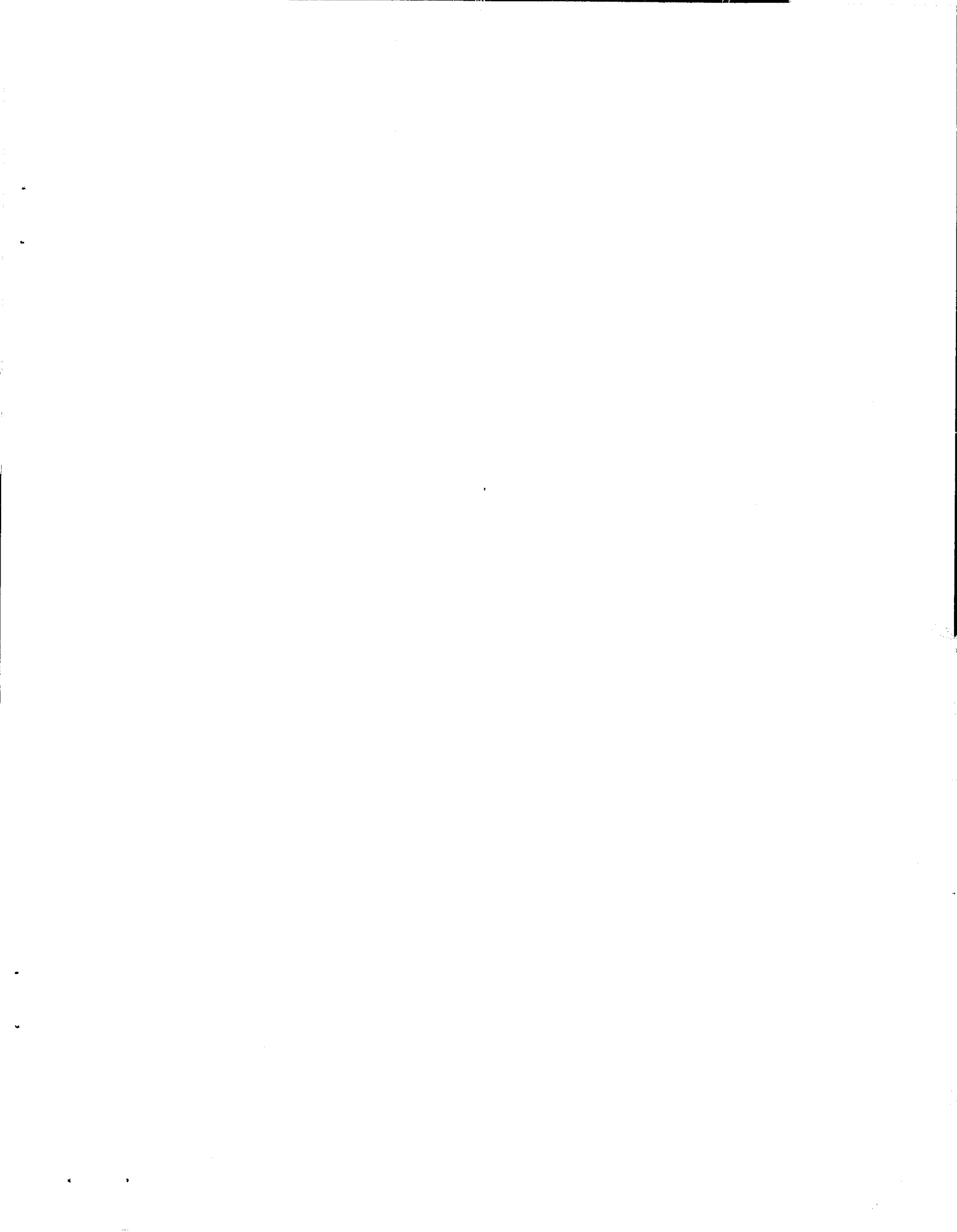
Table 1. Group Means on the Definement of Rape by Ethnic Group and Sex [1]

Scenarios	Ethnic Groups[2]				Anglo			Black			Mexican American		
	A	B	MA	Sig.[3]	M	F	Sig.[3]	M	F	Sig.[3]	M	F	Sig.[3]
1. Popular:Weapon-Injury	1.09	1.28	1.24	.001	1.06	1.11	NS	1.39	1.17	.001	1.39	1.09	.001
2. Popular:No weapon-No injury	1.55	1.59	1.74	.001	1.54	1.57	NS	1.63	1.54	NS	1.72	1.75	NS
3. Bar Pickup:Weapon-No injury	1.67	1.84	2.16	.001	1.57	1.78	.01	1.65	2.02	.001	2.12	2.21	NS
4. Bar Pickup:No weapon-No injury	1.86	2.28	2.25	.001	1.89	1.82	NS	2.43	2.12	.001	2.18	2.33	NS
5. Prostitute:Weapon-Injury	1.59	1.91	2.10	.001	1.54	1.64	NS	1.85	1.96	NS	2.11	2.09	NS
6. Husband-Wife:No weapon-No injury	2.39	2.42	2.50	NS	2.49	2.30	.05	2.59	2.25	.001	2.78	2.22	.001
N[4]	335	336	340		169	166		167	169		167	173	

[1] The range on the question of whether the scenario described a rape was from 1 to 4 with low scores indicating affirmation that this was, in fact, rape.

[2] A=Anglo, B=Black, MA=Mexican American

[3] Significance is based on the F ratio in Oneway Analysis of Variance.

[4] N=Total number in each sample. With missing values deleted on each scenario, the number of valid cases was as follows: Anglo range=332-335, mean valid cases=334; Black range=329-336, mean valid cases=333; Mexican American range=321-340, mean valid cases=335.

Table 2. Ethnic-Sex Group Contrasts on the Definement of Rape

Scenarios	T Values					
	Anglo-Black		Anglo-Mexican American		Black-Mexican American	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1. Popular: Weapon-Injury	7.25***	1.46	7.35***	.85	.06	2.29*
2. Popular: No weapon-No injury	1.48	.32	2.70**	2.77**	1.28	2.93**
3. Bar Pickup: Weapon-No injury	1.24	3.52***	8.05***	5.84***	7.11***	2.93**
4. Bar Pickup: No weapon-No injury	6.25***	4.33***	4.40***	6.04***	2.95**	2.63**
5. Prostitute: Weapon-Injury	4.32***	4.63***	7.71***	6.11***	3.19**	1.81
6. Husband-Wife: No weapon-No injury	1.05	.59	3.53***	.93	1.91	.39
N	336	335	336	339	334	342

* $p \leq .05$

** $p \leq .01$

*** $p \leq .001$

Mean scores on Scenario 2 are consistently higher than on Scenario 1, indicating that when a weapon is not used and injury is not inflicted the forced sexual encounter has less credibility as a rape. Mean differences are significant by ethnicity but not by sex within ethnic groups. Group contrast t values (Table 2) indicate that all Anglo-Mexican Americans and Black-Mexican American females differ significantly; Mexican Americans were less inclined to define Scenario 2 as rape.

The low mean scores on Scenario 1 indicate that all respondents define this as a "legitimate" rape; however, minority males were more skeptical than majority males of the reality of rape and were less inclined than all other groups to define the popular stranger-to-stranger assault as rape. Mexican Americans appear somewhat inclined to limit their definition of rape to the kind of case depicted in Scenario 1. Significant ethnic differences on Scenario 2 are attributable to Mexican Americans; Anglos and Mexican Americans of both sexes differ significantly and Black-Mexican American females differ significantly.

Controversial Rapes: Where Reputation and/or Activity are In Question

Bar Pickups. Forced sexual encounters which result from male-female interaction in bars or what are usually labelled as "pickups" are frequently met with skepticism or punition. Seemingly, the female's behavior places her reputation in question and makes her a "deserving victim" or, at best, one who precipitated her own rape. Scenarios 3 and 4 depict such situations and vary essentially only in terms of the use of a weapon.

Scenario 3: A working woman in her mid-thirties stopped by her favorite bar for a drink after work. She talked with some people there, but talked with one man more than anyone else. As she started to leave, he offered to drive her home. At her apartment, she asked him in for some coffee. Once inside, he immediately pulled a gun and forced her to have sex with him. (Bar Pickup: Weapon-No injury)

Scenario 4: A woman in her mid-thirties went to a singles bar after work to have a drink with some friends. She got into a con-

versation with some people sh∋ had not met before. A
man in the group started to leave when she did and he
offered her a ride home. When they got to her apart-
ment, he asked if he could come in for a cup of coffee.
Once inside, he attempted to seduce her; when she said
no, he forced himself on her and had sexual intercourse.
(Bar Pickup: No weapon-No injury)

Mean differences among ethnic groups for Scenario 3 (Table 1) are signifi-

cant, the responses ranging from an Anglo low to a Mexican American high. Both

Anglos and Blacks differ significantly by sex with males being more inclined to

define the situation as rape. Group contrast t values in Table 2 indicate that

all groups except Anglo and Black males differ significantly. On Scenario 4,

the three ethnic groups differ significantly, ranging from a low Anglo to a

high Black mean; group means are in all cases higher than on Scenario 3 meaning

that all respondents saw Scenario 4 as a less legitimate rape. Only Blacks

differ significantly by sex with males demonstrating more skepticism that this

was a rape. Group contrast t values (Table 2) indicate that all differences

by sex-ethnicity on Scenario 4 are significant.

The Prostitute. People frequently assume that prostitutes, because they

make a living selling sex, cannot be raped. Since prostitutes are on the street

and frequently work in high-crime areas, they are - by definition - an at risk

victim group; the question of whether a prostitute was "really raped" is not

uncommon. The following Scenario involves a prostitute who was accosted with

a weapon and beaten; the facts given indicate that the assailant was not a

client and was not known personally to the victim.

Scenario 5:   A known prostitute was assaulted and forced to have
               sexual intercourse with a young man in his late teens.
               The youth beat the woman and threatened her with a knife
               before escaping. The victim was able to identify her
               assailant as a member of a gang which frequently hangs
               out in the downtown park. (Prostitute: Weapon-Injury)

Mean scores on the above Scenario differ significantly by ethnicity but

not by sex (Table 1). As in Scenario 4, where the woman's reputation is in

question, there is a lack of consensus on whether this case constitutes rape; group means are, however, lower than those of Scenarios 3 and 4 except for Black males. All ethnic-sex group contrasts (Table 2) are significant except for Black and Mexican American females. Since the ethnic groups do not differ significantly by sex, the variations are due primarily to ethnicity with Anglos being the most accepting of the situation as rape, Mexican Americans the least. Scores increase within ethnic groups from male to female until Mexican Americans where males appear to be slightly less accepting of the situation as rape.

Several inferences can be drawn from these cases involving victims whose reputations and/or activity are in question. (1) The large number of group contrast scores which are significant on Scenarios 3, 4, and 5, indicate a lack of consensus with regard to whether such cases do, in fact, constitute "real rape." (2) When responses to these three scenarios are examined simultaneously, support is given the proposition that skepticism with regard to the credibility of rape is mitigated when a weapon and/or injury is involved and the assailant is a stranger. For example, with the exception of Black males, all other group means are lowest on Scenario 5 (prostitute: weapon-injury) and highest on Scenario 4 (bar pickup: no weapon-no injury). (3) Mexican Americans demonstrate more within-group consensus than other ethnic groups on the three controversial rapes; they do not differ significantly on any of the three. Anglos differ significantly on the case of the bar pickup which involved a weapon; Blacks differ significantly on both of the bar pickups.

The Husband-Wife Forced Sexual Encounter

Scenario 6: A husband and wife had an argument. The husband was very angry so he went to a bar to have a few drinks. After several hours he returned home to find his wife asleep. He woke her up and demanded that she have sex with him. She refused, but he slapped her across the face and, although she resisted, forced her to have sexual relations with him. (Husband-wife Assault)

Interestingly, the husband-wife forced sexual encounter - which cannot legally be defined as rape in most states - is the only Scenario on which ethnic group responses do not differ significantly (Table 1). Differences between the sexes are, however, significant for all groups and in all cases the females are more inclined to define the situation as rape than males. T values contrasting ethnic-sex groups indicate that only Anglo and Mexican American males differ significantly, with the latter being less inclined to define the encounter as rape (Table 2). These responses can only mean that the masculine view of the wife as property cuts across ethnic lines, with males and females differing significantly in their responses.

Summary

On four of the six Scenarios, means range from an Anglo low to a Mexican American high. The two exceptions are Scenarios 1 and 4 (popular rape: weapon-injury, and bar pickup: no weapon-no injury). In these two Scenarios, Blacks were the least accepting of the cases as rape. Ethnic group means are significantly different on five out of six Scenarios. Although mean scores vary significantly by ethnic group and sex, differences are largely a matter of degree. A look at the summary table below indicates very few deviations in the rank-ordering of scenarios based on responses to the question of whether the situation described was defined as rape. The three scenarios apparently defined as most legitimate by all groups (1, 2 and 5) had one thing in common. The assailant was a stranger.

In four of the six scenarios, Anglo males have lower mean scores than Anglo females, indicating more liberal or feminist responses to the definition of rape. The two scenarios on which Anglo females scores are lower than males are the husband-wife encounter and the bar pickup where no weapon was used. Anglo males and females differ significantly on two scenarios - the bar pickup

where a weapon was used and the husband-wife rape. Black females scored lower than Black males on four of the six scenarios. The two scenarios on which males are the low-scorers are the prostitute and the bar pickup where a weapon was used. The Blacks differed significantly, however, on four of the six scenarios - on all except the prostitute and the popular rape where no weapon was used. Mexican American males and females are evenly divided with males scoring the lower on three scenarios and females the lower on three. Females scored lower on the popular rape (weapon-injury), the prostitute, and the husband-wife. Mexican Americans differ significantly by sex on only two scenarios - popular rape involving weapon and injury, and the husband-wife rape.

Table 3. Rank-Order of Scenarios from Most Legitimate (1) to Least Legitimate (6) Rape by Sex and Ethnicity.

Scenarios	Anglo		Black		Mexican American	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
1. Popular: weapon-injury	1	1	1	1	1	1
2. Popular: no weapon-no injury	2.5	2	2	2	2	2
3. Bar pickup: weapon-no injury	4	4	3	4	4	4
4. Bar pickup: no weapon-no injury	5	5	5	5	5	6
5. Prostitute: weapon-injury	2.5	3	4	3	3	3
6. Husband-wife: no weapon-no injury	6	6	6	6	6	6

On Assessing Female Responsibility

Stranger-to-Stranger Popular Rapes

Table 4 reveals that all group means are higher for Scenario 2 than 1; other things being equal, the female is seen as less at fault where a weapon is used and injury results. Means for the three ethnic groups differ significantly on Scenario 1, ranging from a Mexican American low to a Black high. Only Blacks differ significantly by sex. The mean for Black males is considerably higher than that of other groups, indicating their greater tendency to
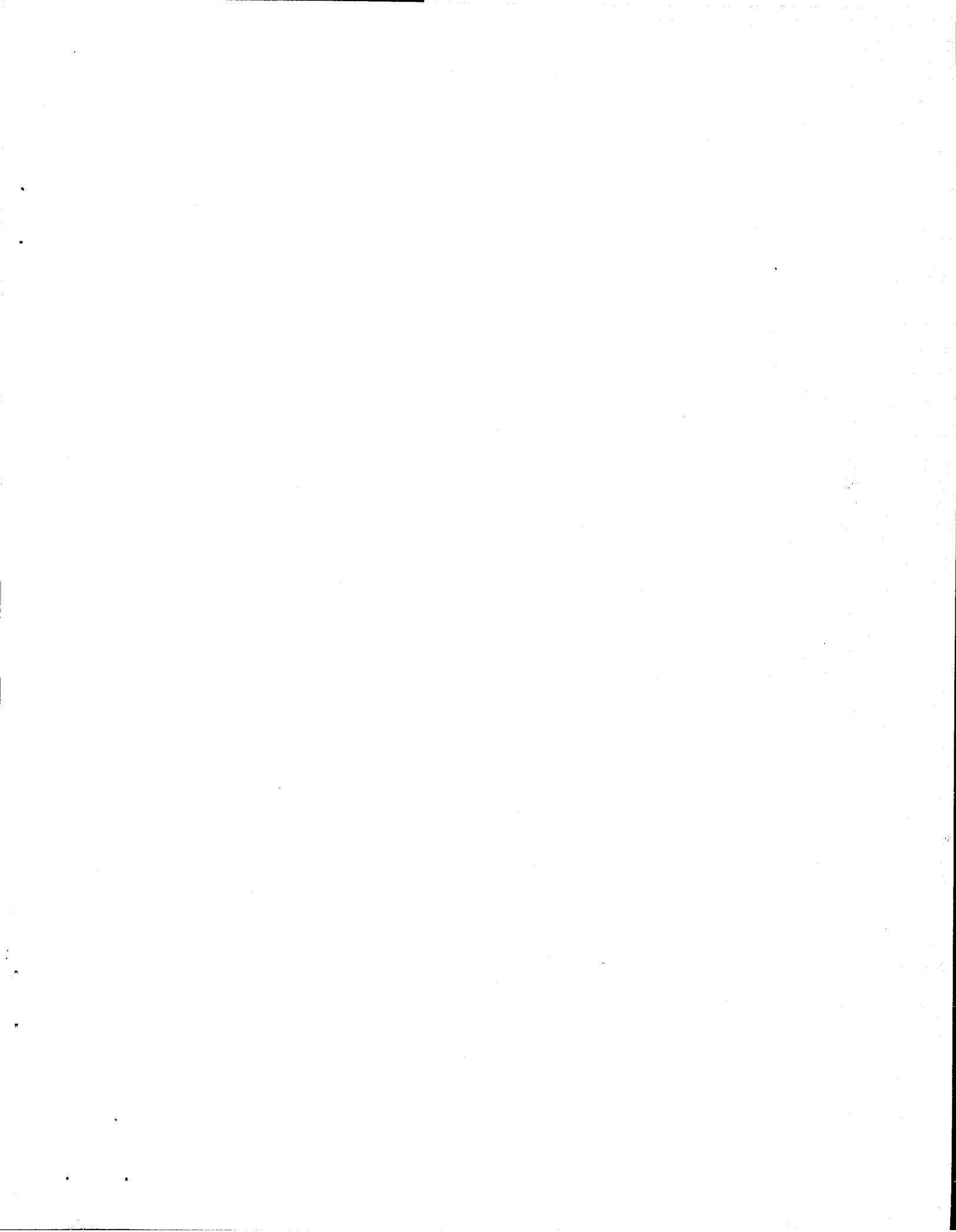
Table 4. Group Means on the Assessment of Female Fault in Forced Sexual Encounters by Ethnic Group and Sex [1]

Scenarios	Ethnic Groups [2]				Anglo			Black			Mexican American		
	A	B	MA	Sig. [3]	M	F	Sig.	M	F	Sig.	M	F	Sig.
1. Popular:Weapon-Injury	1.17	1.24	1.07	.001	1.13	1.22	NS	1.42	1.06	.001	1.08	1.06	NS
2. Popular:No weapon-No injury	1.43	1.46	1.36	NS	1.42	1.45	NS	1.60	1.33	.001	1.31	1.41	NS
3. Bar Pickup:Weapon-No injury	2.21	2.26	2.29	NS	2.05	2.37	.001	2.04	2.47	.001	2.14	2.44	.001
4. Bar Pickup:No weapon-No injury	2.15	2.52	2.27	.001	2.07	2.23	.05	2.44	2.60	.01	2.19	2.35	.05
5. Prostitute:Weapon-Injury	1.55	1.90	1.84	.001	1.45	1.66	.01	2.14	1.66	.001	2.01	1.68	.001
6. Husband-Wife:No weapon-No injury	1.40	1.47	1.35	.05	1.46	1.33	.05	1.88	1.10	.001	1.45	1.26	.01
N [4]	335	336	340		169	166		167	169		167	173	

[1] The range on the question of female fault was from 1 to 3 with low scores indicating low assessment of female responsibility for the forced sexual encounter.

[2] A=Anglo, B=Black, MA=Mexican American

[3] Significance is based on the F ratio in Oneway Analysis of Variance.

[4] N=Total number in each sample. With missing values deleted on each scenario, the number of valid cases was as follows: Anglo range=327-335, mean valid responses=333; Black range=315-336, mean valid responses=331; Mexican American range=327-339, mean valid responses=335.

blame the female for rape. Group contrast scores (Table 5) bear this out:
Anglos and Blacks of both sexes and Black-Mexican American male , differ signi-
ficantly. Female differences among the ethnic groups are also apparent with
group contrasts. Minority females are less likely than Anglo females to blame
the victim for the rape.

There was more agreement on the female's degree of responsibility in
Scenario 2. The group means do not differ significantly by ethnic group and
only Blacks differ significantly by sex (Table 5). Group contrast scores by
ethnicity-sex indicate that Anglos and Blacks of both sexes differ significantly.
Black males evidence the greatest tendency to assess female responsibility for
rape, differing significantly from both Anglo and Mexican American males. Black
females differ significantly from Anglos and are less inclined to blame the
woman for her victimization.

An examination of the assessment of fault in the popular rapes depicted
in Scenarios 1 and 2 indicates that: (1) Women are seen as less responsible
or "to blame" for their own rape where a weapon is used and other variables
are the same or similar. (2) Blacks apparently account for most of the signifi-
cant ethnic and sex differences; this is because Black females are least in-
clined to assess female fault in the popular rape situations; whereas, Black
males are most inclined to do so. (3) In Scenario 1, the most classic of "good
rapes," there are significant differences between minority-majority females;
Anglo females are slightly more inclined than minorities to blame the female
for the rape.

Controversial Rapes: Where Reputation and/or Activity are in Question

Bar Pickups. Responses to Scenario 3 where a weapon was used do not differ
significantly by ethnicity but do by sex (Table 4). Females in all groups are
more inclined than males to blame the woman for the rape. Apparently, these
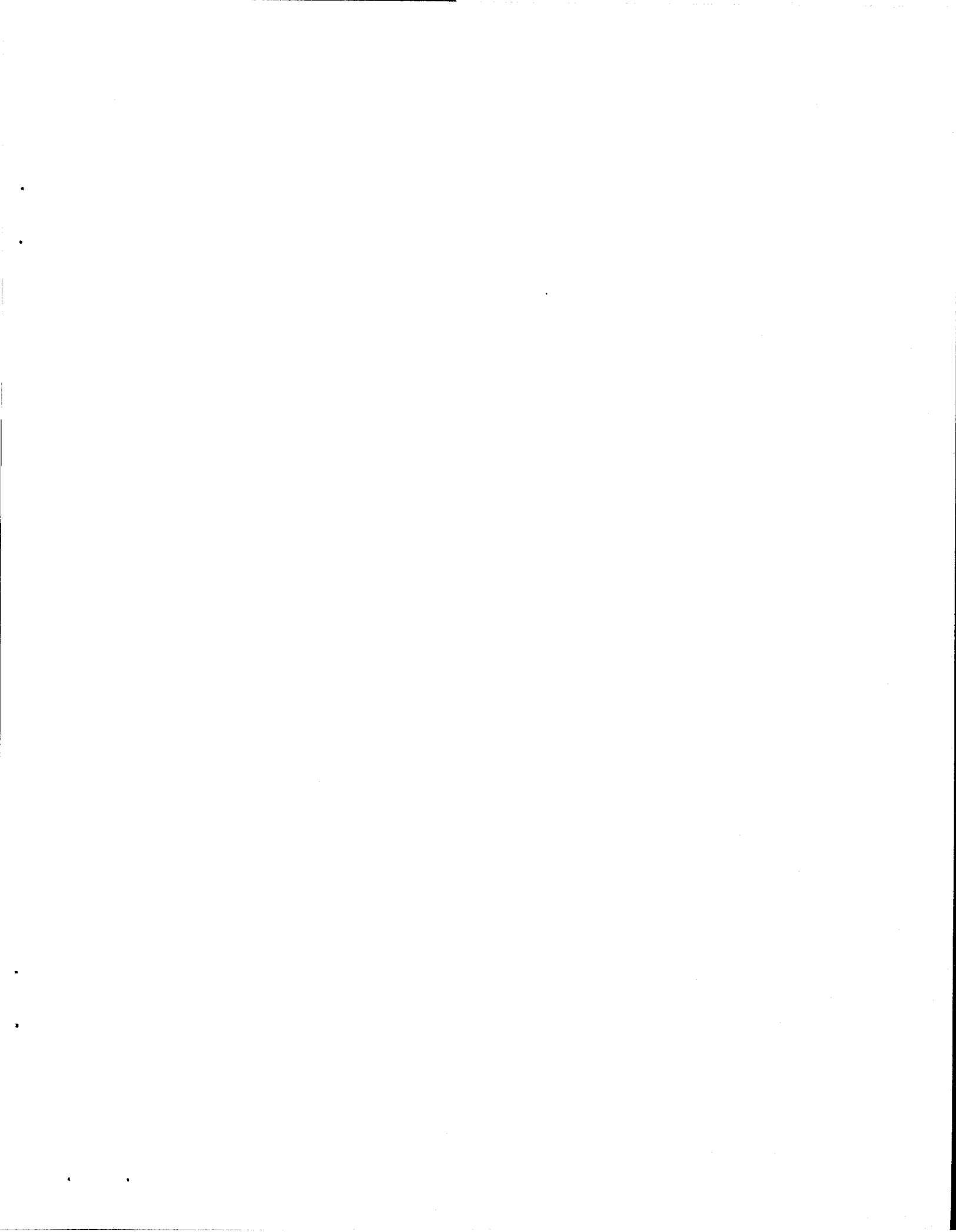
Table 5. Ethnic-Sex Group Contrasts on the Assessment of Female Fault

Scenarios	T Values					
	Anglo-Black		Anglo-Mexican American		Black-Mexican American	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1. Popular: Weapon-Injury	5.31***	3.80***	1.21	3.70***	6.71***	.05
2. Popular: No weapon-No injury	2.63**	1.97*	1.75	.71	4.24***	1.12
3. Bar Pickup: Weapon-No injury	.16	1.35	1.33	.91	1.46	.42
4. Bar Pickup: No weapon-No injury	5.29***	5.51***	1.84	1.51	3.79***	3.84***
5. Prostitute: Weapon-Injury	9.42***	.08	7.15***	.23	1.55	.15
6. Husband-Wife: No weapon-No injury	5.42***	4.76***	.28	1.25	5.39***	3.44***
N	336	335	336	339	334	342

*p $\leq$ .05

**p $\leq$ .01

***p $\leq$ .001

(17)

are within-group sex differences; no significant contrasts show up in Table 5.

Scenario 4 is comparable to 3 except that a weapon was not used. Again, in all cases, females are significantly more inclined to blame the woman for the rape. A comparison of group means of Scenarios 3 and 4 indicates that Anglo and Mexican American female respondents deviated from other groups in that they viewed the victim in Scenario 3 (where a weapon was used) as more at fault than the female in Scenario 4 (no weapon). The only explanation for this apparent inconsistency in logic may lie in a slight variation in the Scenarios. In Scenario 3, the woman invited the male in; in Scenario 4, the male asked to come in for a drink. Perhaps "nice" women still do not invite men in for a drink. Significant group contrasts (Table 5) for Scenario 4 are apparently attributable to Black differences from other groups. Black-Anglo and Black-Mexican American differences are significant for both sexes. Black mean scores are higher than other ethnic groups and female scores are higher than those of males.

Prostitute. In assessing the prostitute's blame (Scenario 5) for her rape, all group means are significantly different. Group contrasts specify that the differences are between minority-majority males. Anglo males were less likely than minority males to blame the prostitute. Except for the mean score of Black males on Scenario 3 (bar pickup, weapon), means were lower for the prostitute than for either bar pickup; apparently an unknown assailant, use of a weapon, and injury override or mitigate the woman's reputation in this case.

In conclusion, the controversial Scenarios point up the fact that: (1) Females are more likely than males to blame the bar pickups (with or without the use of a weapon) for the forced sexual encounter. (2) Blacks more than other ethnic groups tend to blame the woman whose rape did not involve use of a weapon and resulted from social interaction begun in a bar. (3) When a rape is perpetrated by a stranger and involves both weapon and injury, these variable may mitigate the importance of reputation and/or activity where they

are in question (The prostitute was seen as less responsible for her rape by all groups except Black males than the two bar pickups).

The Husband-Wife Forced Sexual Encounter

Assessment of female blame in the husband-wife Scenario is significantly different for all ethnic and sex groups. Group contrasts (Table 5) point out, however, that the differences are largely attributable to Blacks. Blacks as a group were more likely than Anglos or Mexican Americans to blame the female. Yet, broken down by sex, Black females were less likely than any other group to blame the female; Black males were the most likely; both, therefore, contrasted significantly with other ethnic groups of the same sex (Table 5).

Summary

Several facts are apparent from Table 6 below where all cases are rank-ordered in terms of assessment of fault. Anglo and Mexican American rankings are very similar. Between-group differences are the greatest for Blacks as they contrast with other groups; within-group differences by sex are also the greatest for Blacks. The combined use of a weapon, injury, and an unknown assailant (as in the case of the prostitute) seemingly mitigates the importance of reputation and/or activity on the part of the female victim. All groups, except Black males, saw the prostitute (weapon, injury, and stranger) as less at fault than the bar pickup where a weapon was used but where no injury resulted. Reputation and/or activity are still important, however, as evidenced by the fact that the prostitute was assessed as more at fault than the working woman in the popular rape where no weapon was used and no injury was incurred. (Scenario 2).

Anglo males were less likely than Anglo females to blame the victim for rape except for the husband-wife encounter. All differences between the sexes are significant except for the two popular rapes. In four out of six scenarios,

Black females assessed the female as less responsible for the rape than did Black males; the exceptions were the two bar pickups. Blacks differ significantly by sex on all six scenarios. Mexican American males and females each produced the lower mean score on three of the six scenarios. Females were less likely than males to blame the victim in the popular rape where a weapon was involved, in the rape of the prostitute, and in the husband-wife assault. Differences between Mexican American males and females are significant on all except Scenarios 1 and 2, the popular rapes.

Table 6. Rank-Order of Scenarios on Assessment of Female Fault by Sex and Ethnicity.

Scenarios	Anglo		Black		Mexican American	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
1. Popular: weapon-injury	1	1	1	1	1	1
2. Popular: no weapon-no injury	2	3	2	3	2	3
3. Bar pickup: weapon-no injury	5	6	4	5	5	6
4. Bar pickup: no weapon-no injury	6	5	6	6	6	5
5. Prostitute: weapon-injury	3	4	5	4	4	4
6. Husband-wife: no weapon-no injury	4	2	3	2	3	2

The Tendency to Prosecute Alleged Rapists

Stranger-to-Stranger Popular Rapes

Findings on Scenarios 1 and 2 (Table 7) with regard to the expressed tendency to prosecute the alleged assailant are consistent; all groups were more inclined (as evidenced by low scores) to prosecute in Scenario 1 where a weapon was used and injury resulted. In both Scenarios the tendency to prosecute is greatest for Anglos and least for Mexican Americans; differences are significant by ethnicity. Broken down by sex, Anglo males expressed a greater tendency to prosecute (in both Scenarios) than did females; their differences, however, are not statistically significant. Black and Mexican American females
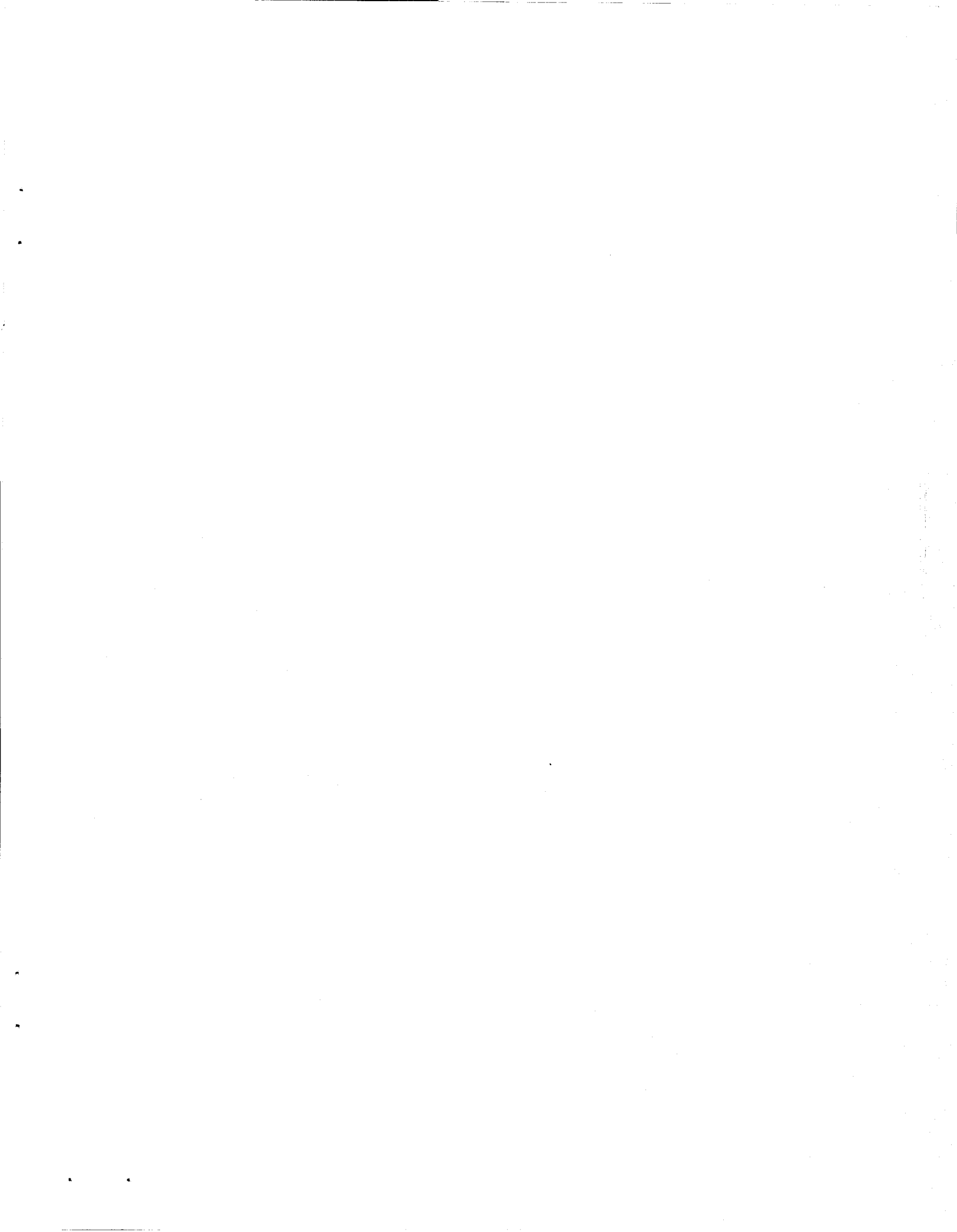
Table 7. Group Means on the Tendency to Prosecute Alleged Rapists by Ethnic Group and Sex[1]

Scenarios	Ethnic Groups[2]				Anglo			Black			Mexican American		
	A	B	MA	Sig.[3]	M	F	Sig.	M	F	Sig.	M	F	Sig.
1. Popular:Weapon-Injury	1.11	1.26	1.27	.001	1.08	1.14	NS	1.47	1.06	.001	1.39	1.16	.001
2. Popular:No weapon-No injury	1.38	1.47	1.58	.001	1.35	1.40	NS	1.68	1.26	.001	1.65	1.51	.05
3. Bar Pickup:Weapon-No injury	1.70	1.56	1.97	.001	1.60	1.81	.01	1.48	1.64	.05	1.99	1.95	NS
4. Bar Pickup:No weapon-No injury	1.99	2.31	2.29	.001	1.97	2.01	NS	2.59	2.03	.001	2.23	2.35	NS
5. Prostitute:Weapon-Injury	1.53	1.86	2.04	.001	1.50	1.56	NS	1.94	1.79	NS	2.13	1.96	.05
6. Husband-Wife:No weapon-No injury	2.75	2.66	2.58	.05	2.81	2.69	NS	2.88	2.45	.001	2.86	2.31	.001
N[4]	335	336	340		169	166		167	169		167	173	

[1] The range on the question of whether the alleged rapist should be prosecuted ranged from 1 to 4 with low scores indicative of a greater tendency to prosecute.

[2] A=Anglo, B=Black, MA=Mexican American

[3] Significance is based on the F ratio in Oneway Analysis of Variance.

[4] N=Total number in each sample. With missing values deleted for each scenario, the number of valid cases was as follows: Anglo range=332-335, mean valid responses=334; Black range=329-336, mean valid cases=333; Mexican American range=321-340, mean valid cases = 335.

were more inclined to say that the assailant should be prosecuted than were minority males; differences are significant. Group contrast scores (Table 8) for the two Scenarios are all significant except for Anglo-Mexican American females and Black-Mexican American males.

Controversial Rapes: Where Reputation and/or Activity are in Question

Bar Pickups. All group means are lower on Scenario 3 than 4 (Table 7), again indicating a greater tendency to prosecute assailants who used a weapon. On Scenario 3, all group means differ significantly except for Mexican American males and females. Group contrasts in Table 8 show that all combinations differ significantly except Anglo-Mexican American females and Anglo-Black males. On Scenario 4, all ethnic group means differ significantly but only Blacks differ significantly by sex. Group contrast scores show all ethnic-sex combinations to differ significantly except Black and Anglo females. Consistent with the controversy which tends to accompany such forced sexual encounters, no consensus or patterns by ethnicity or sex are evident on Scenarios 3 and 4.

Prostitute. Anglos would be most likely to prosecute the assailant of the prostitute, Mexican Americans the least likely to do so; ethnic group differences are significant (Table 7). When broken down by sex, Anglo males and minority females were more inclined than their female or male counterparts, to prosecute the prostitute's assailant. Only one difference was significant - that between Mexican Americans. Group contrast scores by sex-ethnicity, however, indicated that all ethnic-sex groups differ significantly, again supporting the lack of consensus in controversial rapes.

The Husband-Wife Forced Sexual Encounter

Mexican Americans were most inclined to prosecute the husband in the husband-wife encounter, Anglos the least; ethnic group differences are significant
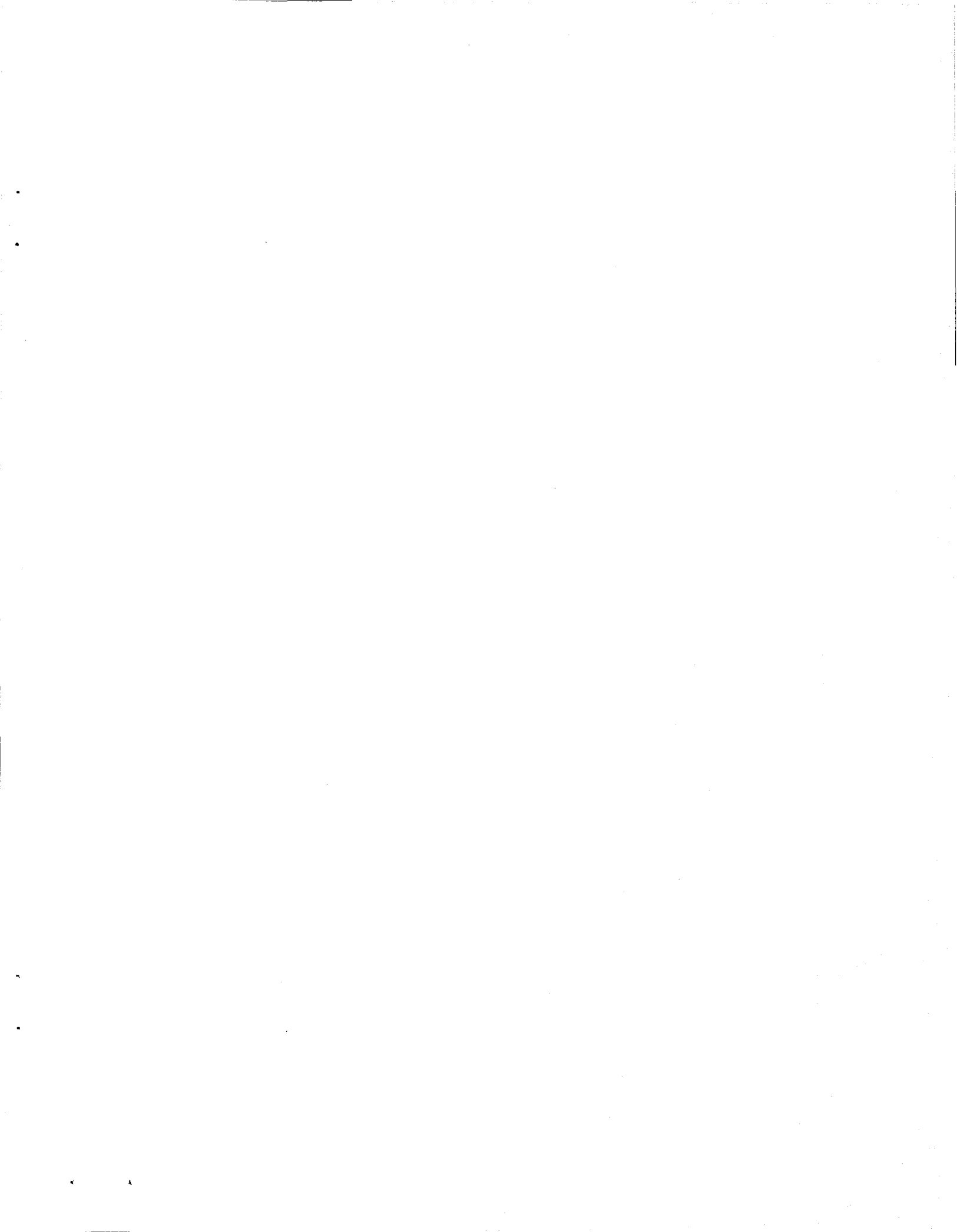
Table 8. Ethnic-Sex Group Contrasts on Tendency to Prosecute Alleged Rapist

Scenarios	T Values					
	Anglo-Black		Anglo-Mexican American		Black-Mexican American	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1. Popular: Weapon-Injury	7.62***	2.22*	6.64***	.37	1.29	2.45*
2. Popular: No weapon-No injury	5.21***	2.43**	5.08***	1.62	.47	4.07***
3. Bar Pickup: Weapon-No injury	1.85	2.20*	5.01***	1.86	6.28***	3.91***
4. Bar Pickup: No weapon-No injury	6.96***	.33	3.91***	4.05***	3.91***	4.22***
5. Prostitute: Weapon-Injury	5.87***	3.35***	8.15***	6.03***	2.19*	2.41*
6. Husband-Wife: No weapon-No injury	.76	2.81**	.62	4.47***	.21	1.71
N	336	335	336	339	334	342

$*p \leq .05$

$**p \leq .01$

$***p \leq .001$

(Table 7). In all cases, females evidenced a greater tendency to prosecute the husband than did males; however, only minority males and females differ significantly by sex. Group contrast scores (Table 8) further specify that Anglo-Black females and Anglo-Mexican American females differ significantly on Scenario 6; there are no significant differences among males on this Scenario.

Summary

As Table 9 indicates, rank orderings of the Scenarios by tendency to prosecute are very similar. Anglo males and females produced the same rank-order. Mexican Americans were the same except for the fact that females were inclined to prosecute the husband before the assailant who assaulted the bar pickup but used no weapon. Black males and females produced similar rank-orders except that Black males would have prosecuted the assailant of the bar pickup who used a weapon before the assailant of the working woman in the popular rape involving no weapon (Scenario 2).

Table 9. Rank-Order of Scenarios on Tendency to Prosecute by Ethnic Group and Sex.

	Scenarios	Anglo M	Anglo F	Black M	Black F	Mexican American M	Mexican American F
1.	Popular rape: weapon-injury	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.	Popular rape: no weapon-no injury	2	2	3	2	2	2
3.	Bar pickup: weapon-no injury	4	4	2	3	3	3
4.	Bar pickup: no weapon-no injury	5	5	5	5	5	6
5.	Prostitute: weapon-injury	3	3	5	4	4	4
6.	Husband-wife: no weapon-no injury	6	6	6	6	6	5

It is apparent from Table 9 that tendency to prosecute is influenced by the woman's reputation and/or activity. Respondents were less inclined to prosecute the assailant of the prostitute who inflicted injury and used a weapon

than the assailant of the working woman who used neither weapon nor injury in Scenario 2. Four of the six groups were more inclined to prosecute the assailant of the bar pickup who used a weapon than the prostitute's assailant who used a weapon and inflicted injury. Except for Mexican American females, all other respondents were more inclined to prosecute the no-weapon assailant of the bar pickup before the husband in Scenario 6. Except for Black males, all group means are lower on Scenario 2 where no weapon was used than on Scenario 3 where a weapon was used but where there was a difference in what the female was doing (going home from work as opposed to "hanging out" in a bar).

The rank-order of Anglo females and males in terms of propensity to prosecute is the same. However, an examination of group means indicates that in five out of six Scenarios, males were more inclined to prosecute than females, the one exception was the husband-wife encounter. Anglos differ significantly by sex on only one scenario - the bar pickup where a weapon was involved. Black females were more inclined to prosecute alleged assailants than were Black males in every case except the bar pickup where a weapon was used. Their differences are significant on all Scenarios except the one involving the prostitute. Mexican American females also demonstrated a greater tendency than males to prosecute alleged assailants, with one exception - the bar pickup where no weapon was involved. Differences are significant between the sexes on all but two Scenarios - the bar pickups.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Although the measure of attitudes about rape by use of scenarios describing forced sexual encounters is admittedly crude, the findings do seem to support the multidimensionality of attitudes about rape - that is, people do differentiate between definement of a situation as rape (presumably by their own "legal knowledge"), versus responsibility on the part of the female, and

prosecution of the alleged rapist. Table 10 below supports the multidimensional approach to measurement. Note that Scenario 1 is the only scenario to rank consistently the same across all three dimensions and this is the only scenario to contain all the elements of a "good rape". Scenario 2 contains all the elements except weapon and injury and is not complicated by the female's questionable reputation and/or activity; it has the second most consistent ranking across all dimensions. In the scenarios involving females whose reputation and/or activity are in question, there is more consistency between definement of the situation as rape and tendency to prosecute than assessment of female fault. These findings are consistent with the Harris survey; while respondents are critical of what they see as permissive female behavior, rape is a crime and should be treated as such; however, the responses on these scenarios (females of questionable reputation-activity) are not as decisive (as measured by group means) as in Scenarios 1 and 2. The responses on the husband-wife scenario follow yet another pattern: it was not seen as a rape; there was little inclination to prosecute but neither was the victim seen as being at fault.

The multidimentionality of the concept of rape is no doubt the reason for its having become a controversial issue in terms of legal-judicial processing. Rape is, in reality, a legal construct just as robbery, burglary, and assault. Unlike these crimes, however, its adjudication has been complicated by sex-role stereotypes, a double standard of male-female behavior and racism. Rape as a legal construct does not allow for the female's reputation and/or activity, nor does it necessarily take into account the relationship between offender and victim except in the case of husband and wife. As pointed out earlier, however, the operational definition of rape does take these variables into account. A crude measure of rape as operationalized in the legal-judicial system and reflected in public attitudes might be to combine responses on de-
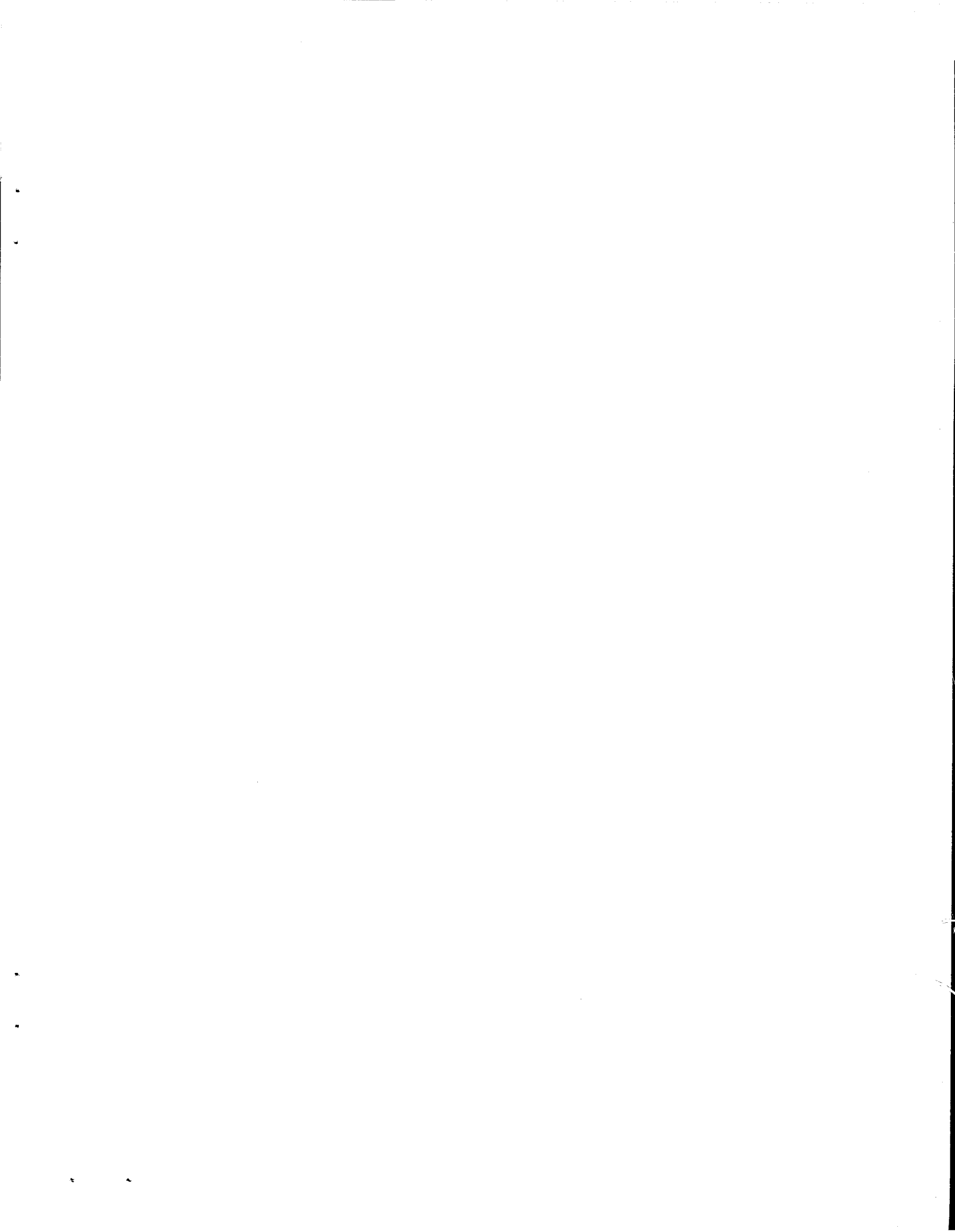
Table 10. Rank Order of Scenarios by Rape Definement, Female Fault and Tendency to Prosecute by Ethnic Group and Sex.

	Rape						Fault						Prosecution					
	A		B		MA		A		B		MA		A		B		MA	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1. Popular: weapon-injury	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2. Popular: no weapon-no injury	2.5	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	2
3. Bar pickup: weapon-no injury	4	4	3	4	4	4	5	6	4	5	5	6	4	4	2	3	3	3
4. Bar pickup: no weapon-no injury	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	5	6	6	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	6
5. Prostitute: weapon-injury	2.5	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	5	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	4
6. Husband-wife: no weapon-no injury	6	6	6	6	6	5	4	2	3	2	3	2	6	6	6	6	6	5

finement of rape, assessment of fault, and tendency to prosecute for a composite score on each scenario. This would provide a more generalized response to rape yet one cognitively based on the three dimensions. Table 11 below represents these composite scores on each scenario. An examination of group means indicates that Anglos present the lowest score (interpreted as indicating that their attitudes are,on a comparative basis, the most liberal-feminist) on five of the six scenarios; the one exception is the husband-wife sexual encounter where Mexican Americans yield the lowest mean score but where differences are not significant by ethnicity. It should not be inferred too quickly, however, that Anglos as a group are more liberal or feminist in their attitudes about rape, nor should sex role stereotypes such as the Black matriarchy or Latino maschimo be resurrected to explain these differences. When the mean scores are examined by sex, a different - and perhaps unexpected - finding emerges.

When compared with Anglo females, Anglo males are consistently more liberal in their attitudes about rape. In five of the six scenarios, they produced lower scores than females (the exception was the husband-wife encounter). Three of the five differences are statistically significant. Black females produced lower composite scores than Black males on five of the six scenarios. The exception was the bar pickup where a weapon was used; all differences are statistically significant. Mexican American females were the low-scorers on four of the six scenarios; the exceptions were the two bar pickups. Three of the four differences are statistically significant.

Over all groups, Anglo males had the lowest composite score on three of the six scenarios: the popular stranger-to-stranger rape with weapon and injury, the bar pickup with no weapon and no injury, and the prostitute with weapon and injury. Black females scored the lowest on the popular rape with no weapon or injury. Black males scored the lowest on the bar pickup where a
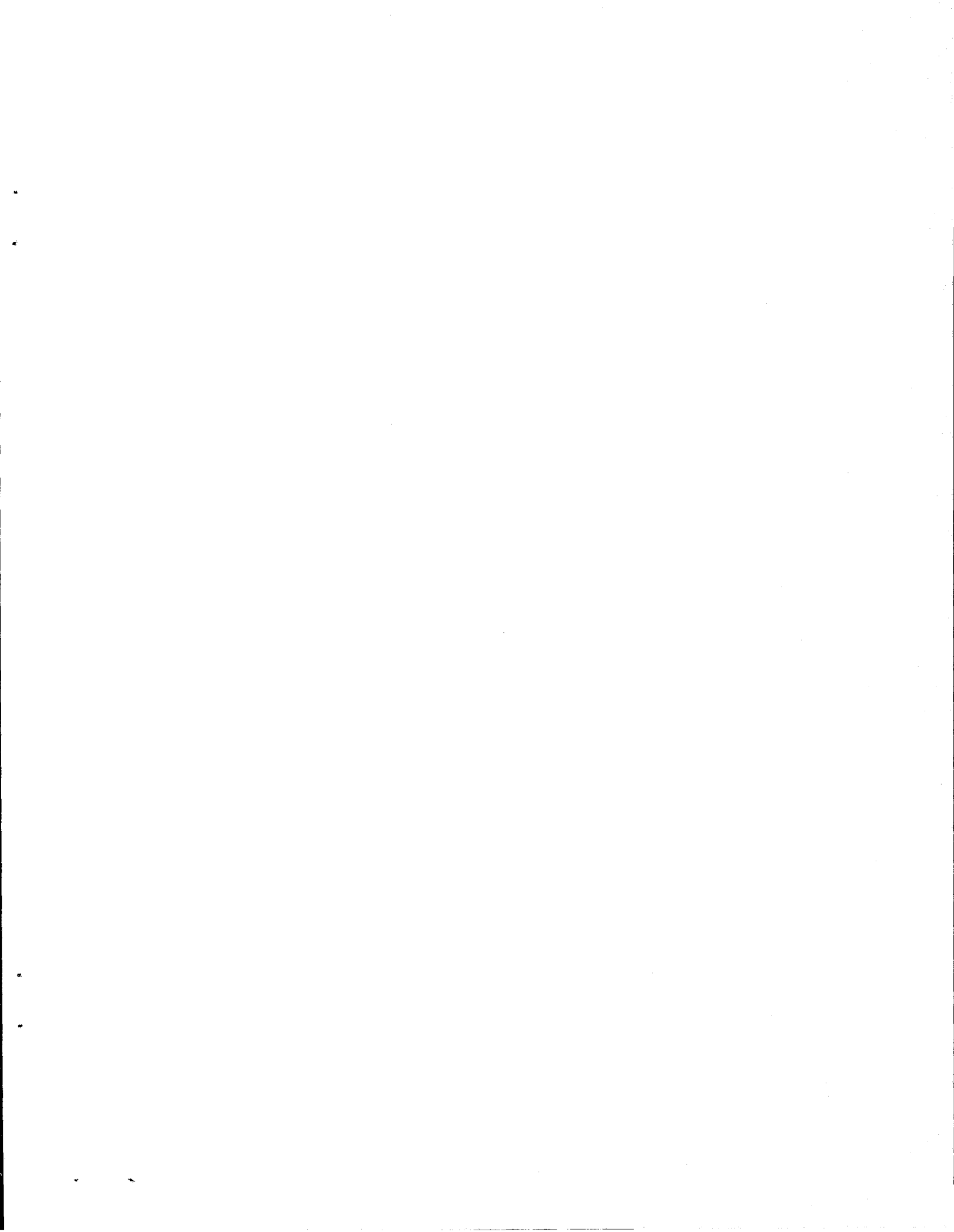
Table 11. Composite Mean Scores on Scenarios by Ethnic Group and Sex.[1]

Scenarios	Ethnic Groups[2]				Anglo			Black			Mexican American		
	A	B	MA	Sig.[3]	M	F	Sig.	M	F	Sig.	M	F	Sig.
1. Popular: weapon-injury	3.37	3.78	3.58	.001	3.27	3.47	.01	4.28	3.30	.001	3.86	3.31	.001
2. Popular: no weapon-no injury	4.35	4.52	4.67	.05	4.29	4.42	NS	4.91	4.14	.001	4.68	1.65	NS
3. Bar Pickup: weapon-no injury	5.59	5.65	6.42	.001	5.23	5.96	.001	5.17	6.12	.001	6.24	6.60	.05
4. Bar Pickup: no weapon-no injury	5.99	7.12	6.82	.001	5.92	6.07	NS	7.51	6.76	.001	6.60	7.02	.05
5. Prostitute: weapon-injury	4.67	5.67	5.98	.001	4.50	4.84	.05	5.92	5.42	.01	6.25	5.73	.01
6. Husband-wife: no weapon-no injury	6.53	6.47	6.42	NS	6.76	6.29	.01	7.22	5.81	.001	7.07	5.79	.001
N	335	336	340		169	166		167	169		167	173	

[1]The range of composite scores on each scenario is from 3 to 11.

[2]A=Anglo, B=Black, MA=Mexican American

[3]Significance is based on the F ratio in Oneway Analysis of Variance.
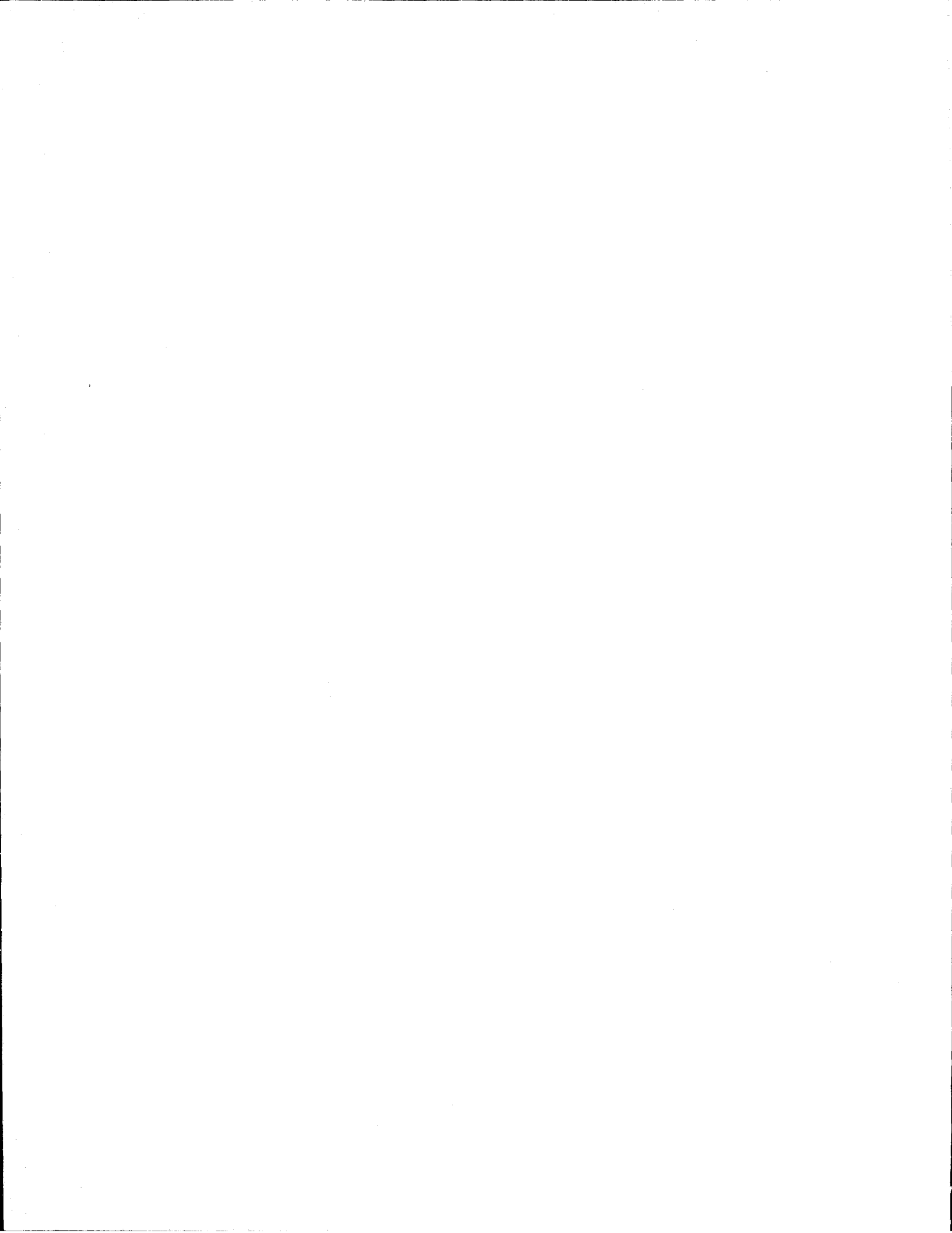
weapon was used. Mexican American females scored the lowest on the husband-wife encounter. Three of the four scenarios on which males indicated more liberal-feminist attitudes have in common the use of a weapon. Three of the four also have in common the female victim whose reputation or activity was in question (bar pickups and prostitute).

The women's movement not withstanding, Anglo males emerge from these findings as the most liberal or feminist in their attitudes about rape when compared with Anglo females and Blacks and Mexican Americans of both sexes. This statement is based not only on the composite scores in Table 11, but on the kinds of rapes on which Anglo males produced the most liberal responses. On the other hand, Black males produced the highest mean composite score (nonliberal-nonfeminist) on four of the six scenarios; the two exceptions were the bar pick-up where a weapon was used (where Mexican American females were the high scorers) and the prostitute (where Mexican American males produced the highest mean score). The tendency for Black males to emerge as the most conservative or skeptical in their attitudes about rape is hardly surprising given the historical convolution of rape and racism for Black males.

These findings support the conclusion that across the gamut of forced sexual encounters, only the popular, stranger-to-stranger rape with weapon and injury was consistently viewed (by rank-order) as a "real rape." Even then, there were quantitative differences in responses which were statistically significant by sex and ethnicity. Before further conclusions are drawn from these data, extensive multi-variant analyses must be done utilizing socio-economic variables while controlling for sex and ethnicity.

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