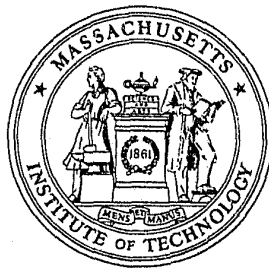
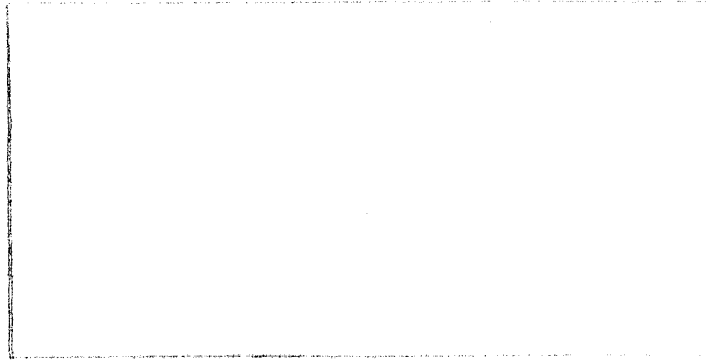


OPERATIONS RESEARCH CENTER



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SECOND QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

April 1, 1978 - June 30, 1978

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF METHODS USED
IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE EVALUATIONS

by

Richard C. Larson

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and

Co-Director

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"An Empirical Study of Methods Used In Criminal Justice Evaluations,"
Grant No. 78NI-AX-0007, funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, Law
Enforcement Assistance Administration, National Institute of Law
Enforcement and Criminal Justice.

Activities on the grant proceeded approximately on schedule during this quarter. A significant fraction of the studies from the sample of 200 has been read, yielding somewhat mixed results. We are continually surprised at the relatively low average quality of the evaluations, with few standing out as exceptional pieces of work. Hopefully we can begin to understand this better when we mail out our follow-up questionnaire, seeking information on time and budget constraints of the evaluation, educational background of the evaluators, etc. We are particularly disappointed in the use (or should we say abuse) of quantitative methods in the evaluations. "Quantitative" is usually interpreted by the evaluators to mean "statistical," rather than "model based." Because of the repeated lack of knowledge of the rudimentary aspects of modeling applied to a problem (particularly in the logistical area), one observes statistical manipulations and related interpretations that are nonsensical. In one study of response time, for instance, a correlation analysis was performed to determine key variables that affect response time. Included in the correlations were, among other things, the variables "response speed" and "distance." As a result of the correlation analysis, the evaluators concluded that response speed is not a significant variable in determining response time. Yet, anyone with elementary training in the physical sciences realizes that time, speed, and distance are related by the simple expression that time equals distance divided by speed.

Because of these quantitative shortcomings in the practice of evaluations, we are redoubling our efforts in the area of model-based evaluations. The results of this effort will be seen in the publications produced this quarter as well as in publications anticipated in forthcoming quarters.

Personnel:

The individuals described in the first quarterly progress report have all contributed to progress on this grant during the second quarter. Vicki Bier, Ed Kaplan, and Cheryl Mattingly are all working full time for two months during the summer to read the reports in the sample of 200 evaluations. Professor Larson is working part-time to supervise these and related activities. Professor Willemain continued to contribute to the grant until the end of the academic year (June 1).

We are fortunate that Mr. Thomas K. Wong, a junior in M.I.T.'s Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, has joined the project staff as part-time computer programmer. He will remain working virtually full-time through July and he will be available to the project as a part-time consultant thereafter.

Mr. Mark McKnew, an interdepartmental doctoral student, while not supported as a research assistant on the grant, was provided with grant support for computer usage in his research on patrol initiated activities. A report summarizing this work will be available in the third quarter.

Questionnaire Design:

The questionnaire that is to be filled out by a project staff member when reading an evaluation has been designed and is attached as Appendix A. We believe that it emphasizes some of the unique foci of this grant, including time and cost constraints of an evaluation, use of feedback during evaluation of a program, use of models in evaluation research, and use of the evaluation results by decision makers.

Computer Programs:

Mr. Wong is responsible for designing, programming, and implementing an interactive natural language computer program for maintaining the project's records on each of the evaluations in our sample of 200. The pur-

pose of the computer program is to maintain on line all information we have on each of these studies.

The studies are coded numerically for easy sorting and grouping according to such variables as substantive area of work, evaluation methodology, relation to the decision making process, relation to the NEP program, relation to the Exemplary Project program, etc. Each file entry will consist of a relatively fixed format set of information (identification) entries, followed by answers to our questionnaire, followed by a free format "misc. remarks" section.

The program, as of June 30, is about 60% complete. A simulated computer terminal session is attached as Appendix B. We hope to demonstrate use of this program on-line from a portable terminal at NILECJ sometime during the third quarter.

Reading the Evaluations:

As of June 30, about 25% of the sample of 200 evaluation reports have been read by one of the project staff members. Start up was a bit slower than expected due to repeated redesign of the questionnaire during the first two weeks of report reading. We expect to have all the evaluation reports read and their questionnaires completed by mid-August.

Publications:

The project produced three publications during this quarter:

"Decision Analysis as a Framework for Evaluation and Decision in Public Policy," Vicki M. Bier.

"Evaluating the Effectiveness of One- Versus Two-Officer Patrol Units," Edward H. Kaplan.

"Bayesian Analysis of Crime Rate Changes in Before-and-After Experiments," Thomas R. Willemain.

Vicki Bier's research note on Bayesian evaluations has been circulated to a small number of evaluators in the Cambridge community and has sparked constructive comments from such specialists in the area as Mark Thompson (a faculty member at the Kennedy School whose doctoral thesis focused on Bayesian evaluations). The abstract of her report follows:

Decision analysis has traditionally been applied to specific problems, to aid individual decision makers to find choices in keeping with their preferences. In contrast, this paper uses the concepts of decision analysis to pinpoint issues common to most public policy problems. This is not a context in which the actual assessment techniques of decision analysis could be applied; however, the concepts can still be revealing.

Ed Kaplan's piece on one-officer vs. two-officer patrol cars makes significant contributions in two areas: on substantive knowledge in the policy area of one-officer vs. two-officer cars and in the policy area that bears on use of quantitative models in evaluation research. We believe that Ed's piece is ready for formal publication and we will shortly request LEAA approval for this step. The abstract of his report follows:

This paper presents a model-based evaluation of one- versus two-officer patrol staffing. Postulated arguments for and against each strategy are outlined as they appear in the literature. Performance measures are elicited from this discussion. Several models are constructed which allow for a comparative analysis using these performance measures. Formal expectations of comparative strategic performance are presented at the end of the paper along with suggestions for further analytical research.

Tom Willemain's paper is the first of two novel pieces on indicating the use of Bayesian techniques in criminal justice evaluation. The abstract of his paper reads as follows:

Bayesian analyses are developed for data consisting of counts of crimes before and after the introduction of an experimental crime control program. It is argued that Bayesian analysis is superior to conventional significance testing in that the entire probability distribution of the estimated change in crime rate can be displayed. Furthermore, the new Bayesian methods developed here are more appropriate than available Bayesian approaches to changes in time series because they make explicit use of the discreteness of the crime count data. The analysis assumes that crimes occur in the before and after periods according to homogeneous Poisson processes with possibly differing rates. This assumption is verified for the case of the Nashville, Tennessee experiment in saturation levels of police patrol. Application of the new Bayesian methods is illustrated by a re-analysis of the Nashville data.

Publications Acquired:

During this quarter, Ms. Dorothy Green carried out the nearly Herculean task of acquiring nearly all of the 200 evaluation reports, communicating with such diverse sources as National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS), NCJRS Microfiche Program, NCJRS Document Loan Program, National Technical Information Service (NTIS), Sage Publications, Abt Associates, Inc., U.S. Government Printing Office, MITRE Corporation, The Urban Institute, International City Management Association, Project SHARE, Rand Corporation, Police Foundation and International Association of Chiefs of Police. In total, there were 68 sources

for book and report orders that had to be contacted. As a result, the publications acquired during this quarter require 12 typewritten pages to list (Appendix C).

As a potential source of concern to NCJRS, Ms. Green discovered that at least 50% of the publication orders taken from the NCJRS data base listed out-of-date sales agencies. Ms. Green obtained each document after tracking down (typically) three additional sources. Her research involved letter writing, telephone calls, and the use of area libraries.

Future Activities:

Except for minor delays in evaluation report reading, the project is close to schedule as indicated in Figure 3 of the original proposal. In fact, the publications already released to date on evaluation methodology put us slightly ahead of schedule in this all-important area.

By mid-August, we plan to have the sample of 200 completed; by the end of the quarter we hope to have our mailed questionnaire designed and mailed to the original evaluators. In complementary areas of work, Vicki Bier continues to focus on Bayesian approaches to evaluation; Cheryl Mattingly is very interested in process evaluation and likely will write a research note on this topic during the third quarter; Ed Kaplan is now focusing his attention on use of models in evaluation of the corrections component of the criminal justice system; Professor Larson is working on an overall statement of project perspective and hypotheses to be tested.

We hope to have at least one site visit to Washington during the next quarter to review our progress with the program monitor.

An Empirical Study of Methods Used In Criminal Justice Evaluations
Final Phase II Checklist
June 12, 1978

1. READER & DATE: _____

2. TITLE: _____

3. SUBJECT & ID#: _____

4. AUTHOR & ORGANIZATION: _____

5. PUBLICATION DATE: _____

6. FUNDING ORGANIZATION, STATE PLANNING AGENCY, OR SPONSOR: _____

7. NCJRS # OR SALES AGENCY: _____

8. CHECK ONE (if applicable):
- Exemplary Project
 - Exemplary Validation Report
 - National Evaluation Program (NEP)
 - State Planning Agency
 - High Impact Anti-Crime Program

9. PERCENT (%) OF BUDGET ALLOCATED TO EVALUATION: _____

14. DID THE EVALUATORS CONSIDER WHETHER PROGRAM GOALS WERE CLEARLY SPECIFIED?
(a)

(b) DO YOU FEEL THAT THEY WERE CLEARLY SPECIFIED? _____

15. DID THE EVALUATORS CONSIDER WHETHER THE PROGRAM WAS DIRECTED AT THE APPROPRIATE
(a) TARGET POPULATION?

(b) DO YOU FEEL THAT IT WAS DIRECTED AT THE APPROPRIATE POPULATION?

16. DID THE EVALUATORS CONSIDER WHETHER THE PROGRAM WAS IMPLEMENTED AS DESIGNED?
(a)

(b) DO YOU FEEL THAT IT WAS IMPLEMENTED AS DESIGNED? _____

20. ARE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES CLEARLY DESCRIBED IN THE EVALUATION? _____

21. Describe feedback between program staff and evaluation staff. If policy changes or unexpected results cause a need for changes in the evaluation design, was the design flexible enough to account for this?

22. Was the research designed to yield information that would be useful in a broader context than just evaluating this particular program?

25. IS THE DATA PRESENTATION ADEQUATE? _____

26. ARE THE METHODS OF ANALYSIS CLEARLY DOCUMENTED? _____

27. ARE THE CONCLUSIONS SUPPORTED BY THE DATA ANALYSIS? _____

28. IS THERE SOME DISCUSSION OF PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS?

29. IS THERE AN INDICATION THAT THE EVALUATION FINDINGS INFLUENCED
(a) ACTUAL DECISION-MAKING ?

(b) COULD THIS TYPE OF EVALUATION BE ADAPTED FOR USE IN PERIODIC REVIEW? _____

Multics 33.12: MIT, Cambridge, Mass.

Load = 11.0 out of 85.0 units: user = 11

--> login TKWong SumLab

You are protected from preemption.

TKWong SumLab logged in 07/12/78 0532.2 edt Wed from Ascii terminal "none".

Last login 07/12/78 0359.0 edt Wed fro ASCII terminal "none".

funds used: \$357.06/\$ 1.e37

Are you working on a Decwriter? --> yes

No mail.

Do you want to enter the MIT/NILECJ EVAL System? --> yes

Welcome to the MIT/NILECJ EVAL System.

Type "help" for information.

System messages:

Report no: 09-87-65 will be deleted 07/13/78 Wed.

Report no: 12-34-56 was added 07/11/78 Mon.

Type "message" or "m" for previous messages.

No memo.

To exit from the system, type "quit" or "exit".

To logout from Multics, type "logout".

What is your name? --> tom

Your name is tom. Is it correct? --> yes

Enter a request.

--> help

The following commands are available:

Command Name	Short form	Function
add	a	add a report
cancel	c	cancel a delete request or terminate the current request immediately
delete	d	delete a report
dprint	dp	dump-print a report via line-printer at IPC.
eval	eval	answer a questionnaire
help	h	provide information concerning the use of EVAL
list	l	list all reports in the system or a particular report
logout	logout	logout from Multics
memo	memo	leave messages to subsequent EVAL users
message	m	print previous system messages
modify	md	modify the content or the questionnaire of a report.
print	p	print a report or reports
quit	q	exit from the EVAL system
search	s	perform a search on reports
statistic	stat	perform a statistical analysis on reports

Please refer to the User's Guide for further information.
help command processed.

Enter a request.

-->

Enter a request.

--> list

Report ID	SUBJ	ENT_NO	AGENCY	NEP	EXEMP	FOCUS	DATA	METH
09-87-65	09	87	65	1	1	3	1	234
	will be deleted 07/13/78							
12-34-56	12	34	56	1	1	2	2	234

List command processed.

Enter a request.
--> print 123456
Specify the output file.
Type "*" or <return> for immediate printout.
-->

Report ID: 12-34-56

07/12/78 0540.4 edt Wed

This report was reviewed by Ed
NCJRS Number 09900.00.036516
Title Detroit Public Schools - Criminal Justice
Systems Careers Program
Author & Organization Aaron
Publication Date 76
Funding Organization Law Enforcement Assistance Program

Abstract:

Final Evaluation of the Cleveland Offender Rehabilitation Project
(CORP), which sought to reduce recidivism among Juvenile Offenders
by Diversion from the Criminal Justice System into a treatment
and Rehabilitation Project.
End of Report.

Questionnaire:

8. Exemplary Project

9. 30

10. one million

11. 20

12. (a) before

12. (b) before

13. COMMENT:

Three. They are administrators.

14. (a) yes

COMMENT:

14. (b) yes

COMMENT:

15. (a) yes

COMMENT:

15. (b) yes

COMMENT:

16. (a) yes

COMMENT:

16. (b) yes

COMMENT:

17. Narrative Case Study

SUITABILITY: 6

COMMENT:

18. yes

COMMENT:

19. (a) yes

COMMENT:

19. (b) yes

COMMENT:

20. (a) yes

COMMENT:

21. (a) yes

COMMENT:

21. (b) yes

COMMENT:

22. yes

COMMENT:

23. Administrative Records already available

SUITABILITY: 5

COMMENT:

24. Content Analysis Descriptive Statistic Statistical Inference

SUITABILITY: 6

COMMENT:

25. yes

COMMENT:

26. yes

COMMENT:

27. yes

COMMENT:

28. yes

COMMENT:

29. (a) yes

COMMENT:

29. (b) yes

COMMENT:

30. yes

COMMENT:

31. yes

COMMENT:

FINAL COMMENTS:

End of Questionnaire.

Print request processed.

Enter a request.

--> search

Enter SUBJ

-->

Enter ENT_NO

--> 30 to 60,90 to 99

Enter AGENCY

--> 14,23 to 33,40 to 60,90 to 99

Enter NEP

-->

Enter EXEMP

--> 1 to 3

Enter FOCUS

-->

Enter DATA

-->

Enter METH

-->

There are 1 report(s) satisfying the search criteria.

Report ID	SUBJ	ENT_NO	AGENCY	NEP	EXEMP	FOCUS	DATA	METH
12-34-56	12	34	56	1	1	1	2	234

Search request processed.

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8. Data Processing and the Courts - Guide For Court Managers, National Center for State Courts, Williamsburg, Virginia, 1977.
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10. New York City Police Department Street Crime Unit - An Exemplary Project, by A. Halper, Abt Associates, Cambridge, Massachusetts, January 1975. [Microfiche, NCJRS]
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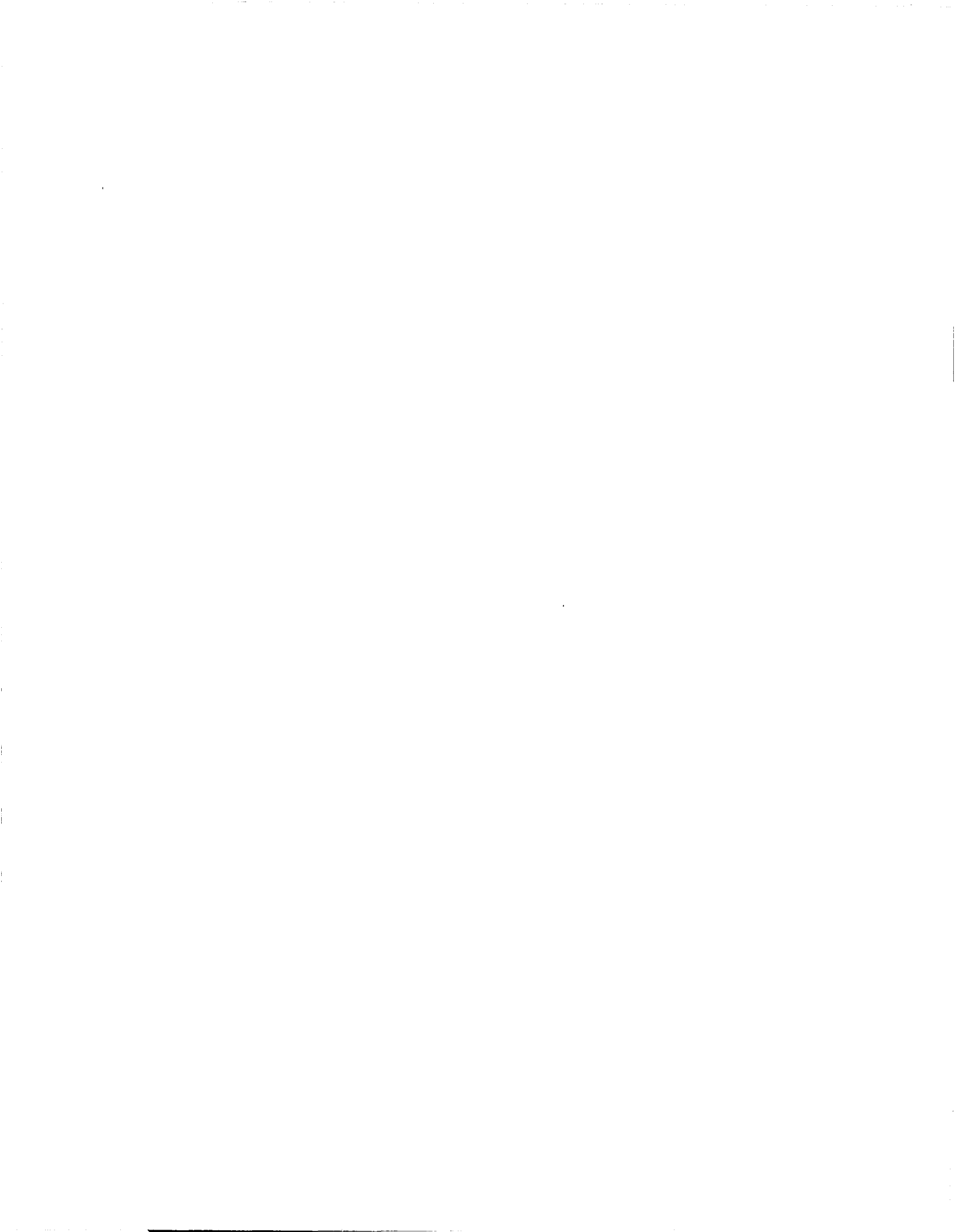
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