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## MANHATTAN CLOSEUP



Photo by Oliver Morris

An officer talks to members of the Good Guy Loitering patrol in Clinton. Neither the men or the officer were identified.

# Clinton Residents Take Stand in War on Crime

By Clem Richardson

The drama of street life is nothing new to Clinton residents, especially those on a block of 45th Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues.

Male and female prostitutes pursue their trade between parked cars on the block of 45th Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues. Residents say drug dealers hold open-air narcotic fairs on the sidewalk.

Most of the 2,000 residents of the block had enough of this low-rent drama long ago. Last weekend, they did something — they sat on their stoops and watched.

"It's just the notion of having decent people standing on the block and making their presence felt," said Renee Stanley, who organized the night of what was billed as Good Guy Loitering. "It shows a lot of little guys getting together can make a difference," she said.

About 50 block residents, supported by police Officers Tom Herrlich and Rob Hanson, put on block association T-shirts and took their dogs, flashlights and love for their homes into the streets for three hours.

They walked the block, hoping that the weapon of public scorn would shame the drug traffic off the street for a few hours.

It worked, for the most part. Although several groups of street toughs and prostitutes walked through the block several times, none stayed very long.

Those who did, like two prostitutes who paused under an awning of the Martin Beck Theatre, left quickly as angry residents gathered around them. "Get out of here," yelled one resident. "We don't want you here."

"I guess you can call this passive intima-

tion," said Renee's husband, Gordon Stanley. "It's a form of creative nonviolence."

The neighborhood is the first residential area north of Times Square, said John Fisher, chairman of the tenant association.

Its proximity to the theater district and hotels and apartment buildings has made it a favorite living quarter for Broadway performers and hopefuls. Residents said the late Spencer Tracey once lived here, and Doris Day devoted an entire chapter of her autobiography to her life on the block.

The block has seen good and bad years. A sweep in the late 1970's ran out many of the hot-sheet hotels, bucket-of-blood nightclubs and brothels, said Bolen High, who has lived on the block for 16 years.

"It's been bad at times, but never this bad," said Michael Distend, a 41-year-old writer and martial artist. "They're more blatant now, just totally immoral."

All of the residents have urban horror stories to tell. Distend said he seen prostitutes serving customers between parked cars.

Marianne Turner, 46, an actress and 14-year block resident, said she has watched crowds of up to 20 people smoking crack at the back door of the Martin Beck Theatre "in broad daylight."

Renee Stanley said the association plans to step up its clean-up efforts. They plan to petition the police department for more beat officers, and may even ask that parking be prohibited on the stretch, a move which worked in an earlier effort. "Our motto is it's not just our block, it's our home," she said.

"We're not giving up these apartments or giving up this block," said Distend. "With prices being what they are in Manhattan, there's no place for us to go."