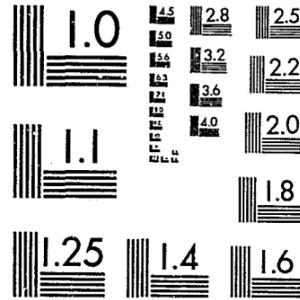


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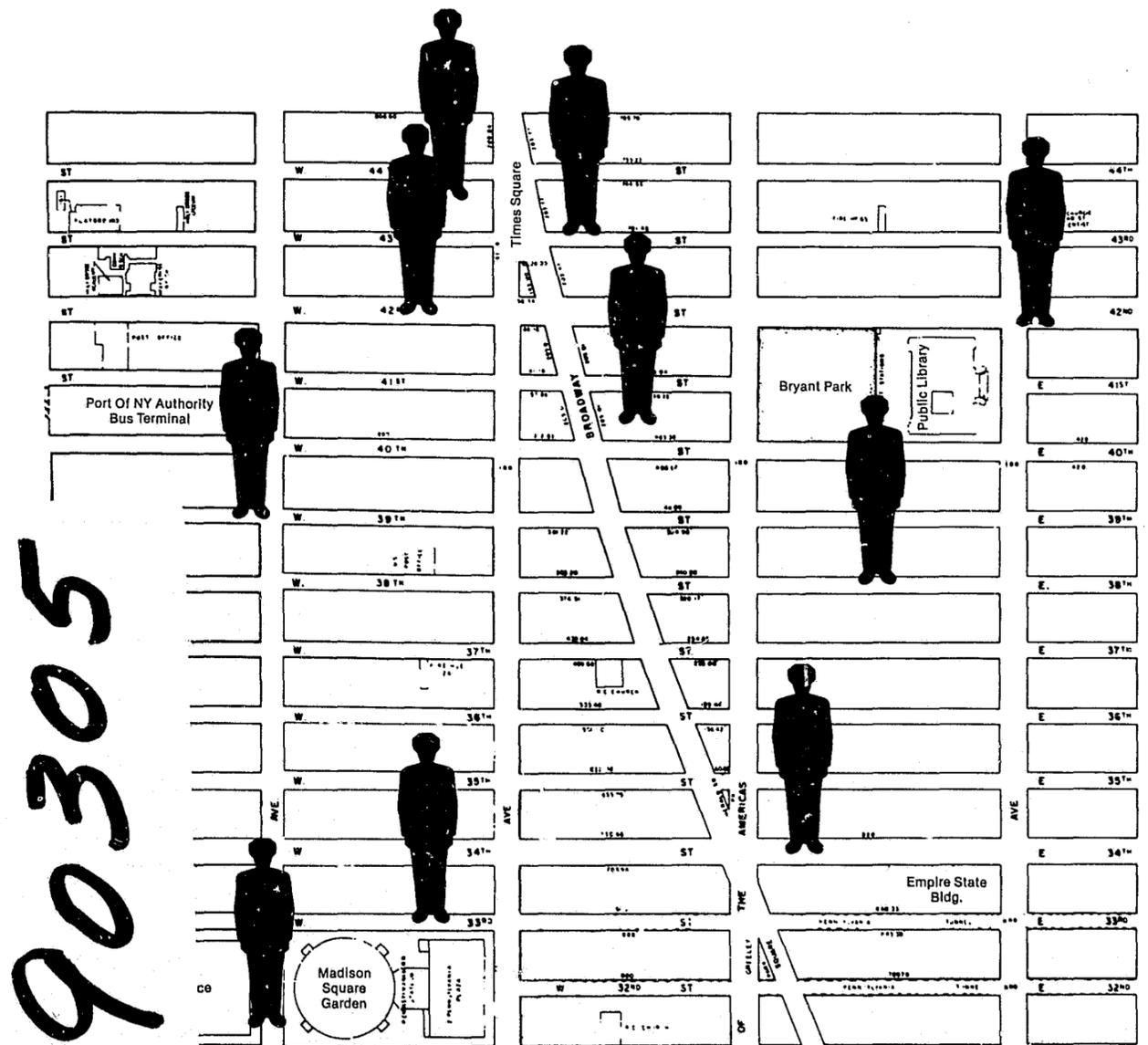
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1/20/84

# Police Patrol And Street Conditions

## The Fund for the City of New York



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U.S. Department of Justice  
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# Summary

Over a five-month period between July 1979 and December 1980, trained observers from the Fund for the City of New York took a closer look at the Times Square area than most New Yorkers care or dare to. For fifty nights during the five months, the observers toured a sample of blocks, recording the number, type, and location of activities such as prostitution, gambling and con games, peddling, and narcotics dealing. These street raters were part of an effort initiated by a New York City Deputy Mayor and the Police Department to measure patrol effectiveness and thus make better use of resources available to control low level street offenses. The idea was that systematic and reliable ratings on street conditions, together with complaint/arrest and deployment information and precinct lore, would help the police work more effectively.

Following a summer 1979 pilot investigation, which demonstrated that this kind of data could be collected routinely, the Fund received Law Enforcement Assistance Administration funding to redefine an initial measurement system, use it to collect information for analysis, and report it to the police commanders involved.

Working closely with the Police Department, the Fund was able to develop a reliable and valid system; but the routine gathering and reporting of the information and street condition data did not prompt significant deployment decisions during the nine-month course of the project. The monthly reports generated interest, but for the most part management use was confined to confirming impressions and decisions internally.

Routine monitoring, then, was not used to suggest or evaluate police deployment initiatives, but special application of the monitoring techniques during a period of intensified drug enforcement in Bryant Park did help both the Police and Parks Departments in assessing their winter efforts to clean up the park. Police and other law enforcement officials agreed that using the system in evaluating special situations would be of greater value than routine monthly monitoring and reporting. The Department didn't regard the continuation of the project as one of its priorities at this time, however, and we concluded that continued investment on the part of the Fund and LEAA was not warranted.

The techniques for collecting and reporting street condition information are refined to the point where they can be used by this police department or others who wish to measure outcome of patrol experimentation.

# Life at the Crossroads

This report documents and evaluates the results of a jointly sponsored effort by the Fund for the City of New York and the Police Department to develop a methodology for evaluating street conditions, the term used by the police to refer to the visible presence of low level street crimes, such as prostitution, drug selling, peddling and gambling. The project, initiated a year and a half ago at the request of then Deputy Mayor for Criminal Justice Herbert Sturz, was set in the context of a special police initiative. In the spring of 1978 the Police Department tripled its uniformed patrol commitment to Times Square, an area long plagued by street crime and assaultive, often menacing street conditions. Anticipating that the media would criticize this police investment as just one more in a string of well-publicized but short-lived and futile attempts to clean up Times Square, the police deliberately downplayed the initiative.

Although "Operation Crossroads," as it came to be called, was indeed another attempt to improve Times Square, it differed from previous efforts in the nature of the deployment strategies used (low arrest, high visibility of uniformed presence on the

streets), in the coordination of police efforts with such other law enforcement initiatives as the Midtown Enforcement Project and the District Attorney's Pimp Prosecution Unit, and in the acknowledgement that police effort alone could not eliminate the problems of the area.

### **Combatting Conditions: Previous Strategies**

In previous years, police in Times Square had relied almost exclusively on a high arrest strategy in responding to street condition problems, occasionally undertaking sweep arrests to clear a block of loiterers. The sweep strategy involved mobilizing a squad of officers who descended on the problem block and carried off the offenders in paddy wagons. The court declared this approach unconstitutional, and the police discontinued the sweeps.

Commanding officers began to view the use of arrests for low level street crimes as self-defeating. The arrest had only temporary, if any, impact in altering conditions. The arrest and arraignment procedure was so time consuming that frequently an officer initiating an evening arrest was removed from his or her post for the balance of that night and often the entire next day. Not only did the area then suffer the loss of an officer, but also the Department paid overtime, bringing into question the cost effectiveness of this approach. Moreover, the majority of low level arrests were dismissed by the courts or disposed of with light sentences. Of 965 persons arrested for prostitution during the period April through June 1979 in

the Midtown area, 790 pleaded or were found guilty. Seventy percent of these guilty defendants received a conditional discharge or a sentence<sup>1</sup> of time served.

### **Aggressive Visibility Urged**

Given these considerations, the major operating premises of Operation Crossroads were to keep the uniformed officer on post, to avoid low level arrests, and to maintain high visibility--particularly during the evening hours. Officers were instructed to patrol aggressively and to discourage loitering of any kind. The explicit goals of Crossroads were not only to reduce street crime but also to improve street conditions (i.e., to reduce loitering by threatening individuals and groups; to break up gambling and con games such as "3-card monte"; to discourage soliciting and harassing by street prostitutes and drug sellers), and thus to give the public a greater sense of security in the area.

The Department's commitment to this effort was considerable. Approximately 100 extra police officers (in addition to the original contingent of 50 patrolmen from Midtown North and Midtown South precincts) were assigned to a core area extending from 40th to 50th Streets, Sixth Avenue to Ninth Avenue, during the hours of 6:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. Personnel were drawn from the Tactical Patrol and

<sup>1</sup>Time served refers to the period of temporary incarceration between the arrest and the disposition by the court. Time served is often the only time that guilty defendants spend in jail.

Neighborhood Stabilization units as well as the Public Morals Division. Crossroads represented an extra annual expenditure for policing Times Square of approximately three million dollars (estimated at \$30,000 per officer per year).

The natural question for the managers of Operation Crossroads was "what are we getting from this commitment of resources?" Use of the officers in Times Square was not only expensive but also meant they were not available for use elsewhere.

### **Measuring Patrol Effectiveness: The State of the Art**

The commanding officers of Operation Crossroads believed that their initiative would be effective, but wanted objective evidence to evaluate overall progress and special patrol strategies.

The state of the art of police decision-making is much less refined than one would expect. Although one public image of police work is that choices regarding where and when to post a patrol and how many police to assign are made confidently, and with fairly good information regarding cause and effect, police will admit privately that they don't always know what to expect from particular police initiatives nor do they have good means to evaluate the effects of their decisions.

In developing patrol strategies for Times Square or any other area, police management must consider many variables: the size of the force to be used, the time and location of

patrols, the mix of uniformed and non-uniformed officers, the mode of patrol (foot, mounted, radio car), the type of patrol (routine preventive, decoy), and arrest strategy (high visibility and low arrests; selective arrests targeted by type of offense, location, and time; high arrest). Since each of these variables requires a choice among several alternatives, there are literally hundreds of possible deployment strategies that could be pursued for a particular area. In addition to considering all of these variables, the police must also honor previous resource commitments and take community reactions into account.

Ideally, the choice of a deployment strategy involves an assessment of available resources and the effectiveness of one strategy over another to accomplish a specific objective. To measure deployment effectiveness, investigators have instinctively looked to existing complaint/arrest data, but there are inherent problems in drawing conclusions from arrest data alone. First, these data are difficult to interpret. A high level of arrests in a particular area, for example, is open to three distinctly different explanations:

1. that police presence is effective in that offenders are being apprehended;
2. that police presence is ineffective, in that large numbers of offenses are being committed;
3. that a high level of arrests is an indicator of an aggressive arrest strategy and not a measure of police effectiveness.

For Operation Crossroads, the police had deliberately selected a high visibility/low arrest strategy with the dual objectives of reducing crime and improving street conditions. The use of number of arrests as the sole effectiveness measure in a program with a deliberate low arrest strategy was clearly inappropriate. Secondly, crime data are dis-trusted because they are compiled by the police and may be vulnerable to "conscious and unconscious manipulation, misrepresentation and dis-tortion."<sup>1</sup> Third, complaint/arrest data are dependent on reported crime and since the majority of crimes remain unreported<sup>2</sup>, arrest data are spurious indicators of crime levels.

The victimization survey, a telephone survey of randomly sampled households, attempts to estimate the extent of unre-ported crime and was an important advance in techniques for evaluating patrol effectiveness. It has been used in several major patrol evalua-tions, including the Kansas City Patrol Experiment, and corrects the pitfalls of relying on reported crime alone. These surveys are, how-ever, extremely costly to undertake and for Crossroads a major question would still remain unanswered, namely, did street conditions improve?

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<sup>1</sup>The Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment (Washington, D.C.: The Police Foundation, 1974).

<sup>2</sup>James Q. Wilson, Thinking About Crime (New York: Basic Books, 1975).

## Looking for Links

The managers of Operation Crossroads recognized the need for alterna-tives to traditional measures of effectiveness. More and more, police managers in urban areas are required to base deployment not only on in-cidence of crime, but also in response to threatening street conditions and public demands for high police visibility. The links between actu-al crime, police deployment, police visibility, public perception of crime, and street conditions have not been established. But police and other enforcement officials believe that certain types of street condi-tions such as the number, type, and frequency of street solicitations, the number of individuals loitering in doorways, and storefront uses and their hours of operations do contribute to, or have the potential to contribute to, serious crime. At the very least, offensive street conditions are perceived as dangerous and threatening to the public and are a major reason for avoidance of an area, especially in the evening hours. They are a primary contributor to the negative image of Times Square held by most New York area residents and tourists, and are part of a self-perpetuating cycle of decay, well documented in the City University of New York's West 42nd Street Study.<sup>1</sup> Any serious effort to revitalize Times Square (or any other area) and increase its

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<sup>1</sup>West 42nd Street Study: The Bright Light Zone. (New York: City University of New York Graduate School and University Center, 1978.)

legitimate use must contend with the immediate problem of improving street conditions and restoring public confidence.

### A First Cut

In the summer of 1978, with the assistance of the Police Department and the Midtown Enforcement Project<sup>1</sup>, the Fund conducted a pilot to test the feasibility of a method of monitoring street conditions. The approach was straightforward. We knew that when theatergoers, merchants, and residents described the Times Square area they seemed to employ similar standards for assessing change. When asked whether they thought Operation Crossroads was having an impact, local shopkeepers had these comments:

"I feel much safer. There's been a tremendous decrease in hookers and bums and there (are) a lot more cops out there and they seem to be stricter."

"There are less hoodlums around, no doubt about it."

"The whores still stand out there day and night and they're ruining my business."<sup>2</sup>

While these respondents did not agree on the results of Operation Crossroads, they did list similar criteria for

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<sup>1</sup>The Midtown Enforcement Project is a part of the Office of the Mayor. Its primary objective is to coordinate a cooperative effort among City agencies and private groups to improve conditions in Midtown, and particularly in the Times Square area, through economic development, law enforcement, land-use regulation and improved government services.

<sup>2</sup>New York Times, June 13, 1978.

measuring the results--namely, the number and types of street users, as well as the visibility of the police presence.

Our approach was to take these "common sense" measures of street conditions and design a method for observing, recording, and analyzing them systematically. In the method used in the pilot test, observers walked down one side of a block and recorded the category of activity and location of each person standing on the blockface.<sup>1</sup> Police presence was tallied separately. During the two week pilot test observers inspected six sample blockfaces four times each evening. We aggregated the data to show the mix of users by blockface, by time of day, and day of week.

From the pilot work, we learned that street monitoring was technically possible and that particular activities could be identified and coded. We also learned that observers could safely catalog sidewalk activity on a block in Times Square at night with little notice and apparently without affecting conditions themselves. From the data collected during this brief period (12 evenings), we found overall variations in both the number and mix of users by day of week and by time of day. When we compared the use patterns of specific blockfaces, we also observed major differences. During the late

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<sup>1</sup>A prescribed and coded inventory of kinds of activity was used and recorded on schematic maps. Some examples of coded stationary activity were prostitution, drug selling, drinking, gambling, windowshopping, waiting in a movie line, watching a street performer.

evening hours the proportion of negative use<sup>1</sup> on some blocks was observed to be as high as 95%; on others, as low as 15%.

On some blocks we found that the number of negative users remained constant over the course of an evening, but their relative presence significantly increased because of the decline in positive use during the late night hours. We also found that certain blocks had much higher percentages of negative users congregating in large groups of five or more. Against these patterns of street use we tabulated observations of uniformed police activity and found that 60% of the police observed were stationary and of this group about one-third were gathered in groups of three or more.

We assumed that if data of this type were collected routinely, we would be able to say something about change in conditions in the area over time. Moreover, the information could serve as a base against which the effect of law enforcement efforts could be measured.

### Information for Deployment

When the pilot work was reviewed by Deputy Mayor Sturz and the commanding officers of Operation Crossroads, they recognized the potential value of street condition information in assessing deployment effec-

<sup>1</sup>For analytic purposes the police categorized our list of users into two groups based on their impression of whether the user had a negative or positive/neutral effect on street conditions.

tiveness, not only in Times Square but in any other area where the police were deploying for street conditions. Police managers hypothesized that an objective assessment of street conditions would help them in justifying resource allocation decisions as well as testing and evaluating specific deployment initiatives. We have outlined below some examples of common police decisions regarding street conditions, the current means of making those decisions, and the potential contribution of a monitoring system toward making better informed decisions.

#### WHAT POLICE NEED TO KNOW

What is the relative effectiveness of using various uniformed and plainclothes units to combat conditions?

What is the cost-effectiveness of one strategy vs. another in combating street conditions?

How to designate and adjust priority posts.

#### WHAT MEASUREMENT IS AVAILABLE

Patrolmen of each unit file condition reports on their posts on existing environmental problems (street lights, pot holes), as well as social (problem establishments, citizen complaints). The criteria for reporting conditions are not standardized. Moreover, subjective bias can be self-serving especially when individual and unit performance is at stake.

The common strategy, a very costly one, is to inundate an entire area and maintain intense coverage until resources are required elsewhere. Measurement is limited to complaint-arrest data.

Priority posts are foot patrol beats designated for constant coverage. These designations are made on the basis of crime statistics and community complaints. Changing the designation is often politically difficult without objective indices of need for coverage.

Police must constantly make decisions like the ones outlined above with inappropriate, biased, or just scanty information. Our assumption was that if reliable and objective street condition data were collected and reported on an ongoing, routine basis, the police could use these measures to assist them in making common deployment decisions, not only in Times Square but in any area where resources were allocated in response to street conditions.

### **Next Steps**

Original expectations were that, if the project were largely successful, it would take roughly three years at a minimum for it to become a management information system regularly in use at the Police Department. In the first phase, we had found that the project was technically feasible and had the support of the police. The next step was to launch an ongoing data collection operation, to begin regular reporting of conditions, and to apply the monitoring system in measuring the impact of specific police-initiated deployment experiments. The project was not conceived in the traditional research model, where the researcher begins with a set of hypotheses, structures data gathering to answer specific questions, leaves the setting at a fixed point in time, and reports results. Rather than produce a set of findings, our goal was to produce a data collection and reporting capability which would give police managers a new piece of outcome information on patrol effectiveness. Ultimately, these managers would receive routine reports on

street conditions--just as they now receive routine information on crime statistics--and use the reports in making better-informed deployment and resource allocation decisions. If the police used the information in Times Square, and their work benefited from it, the system would be expanded to other parts of the city.

We expected this management information system to evolve much like Project Scorecard, a street cleanliness information system developed by the Fund in 1972 for the Department of Sanitation. Initial field operations focused on the routine collection of street cleanliness ratings for selected commercial strips. In 1974, the system expanded to a citywide sample of all types of streets. Regular monthly reports described changes in cleanliness over time for each Sanitation command. In 1976, Scorecard was moved to the City and became a routinized method of evaluation within the Mayor's Office of Operations.

### **Proposal Development, Fall 1978**

The Fund and the Police Department proposed a nine-month project calling for:

- development and testing of a data collection instrument and procedures for using it;
- implementation of systematic field observation and creation of a data base detailing street use in the Times Square area;
- design of a data processing and analysis capability, and development of formats for reporting on patterns and changes in street use;

--application of the data base in developing hypotheses regarding the effect of police presence on street conditions;

--design of police deployment and patrol experiments to evaluate the utility of the monitoring system as an assessment tool;

--recommendations for further development, expansion, and institutionalization.

We submitted a proposal incorporating the steps outlined above to the New York City Criminal Justice Coordinating Council in fall 1978, and requested \$60,000 from CJCC to be matched with a \$30,000 grant from the Fund.

At the end of the nine-month period, the police and the Fund would evaluate the actual utility of the system against the expectations for its use and decide whether and how to proceed.

### **Identifying Constituents**

The police managers supporting this project were in positions that would allow them to make use of the data to assess deployment. Assistant Chief Daniel Courtenay served as Borough Commander of Patrol Borough Manhattan South and became Chief of the Organized Crime Control Bureau during the project period. Serving as Courtenay's Zone 3 Commander was Deputy Chief Gerard Kerins. (Zone 3 includes the two largest precincts in the Department: Midtown South and Midtown North, and encompasses the entire Times Square area, all transportation terminals, the Garment District, and all the major New York hotels, theaters, and

department stores.) Kerins was the chief strategist behind Operation Crossroads, and we worked closely with him and his precinct commanders --Deputy Inspector Dennis Ryan in the South and Deputy Inspector Eugene Brozio in the North.

Deputy Chief Robert Colangelo of the Organized Crime Control Bureau was also involved in the project from its start. Chief Colangelo was interested in the applications of street use information for the planning and management of the efforts of the Public Morals Division (PMD) of the Organized Crime Control Bureau. PMD enforcement efforts are centered around prostitution, gambling, and narcotics, all of which are directly related to street conditions throughout the city and Times Square particularly.

Carl Weisbrod, Director of the Midtown Enforcement Project (MEP) was another advocate for the street monitoring system. The efforts of MEP have focused on identifying, investigating, and prosecuting illegal business establishments in the Midtown area. MEP's enforcement efforts focus on requiring that businesses identified as having a negative impact on street conditions adhere strictly to liquor licensing, health and administrative, building, and fire codes. Like the police, Weisbrod saw a use for good measures of changing street conditions. He believed that the city's efforts were improving the area but lacked an objective means of assessing change.

We also identified several non-law enforcement constituencies for street condition information. We participated in monthly meetings of the Times Square Task Force, a forum composed of representatives from government agencies, community boards, theater groups, and economic development advocates. The Task Force was chaired by Sturz and Robert Wagner, Jr., at that time Chairman of the City Planning Commission. Community and business groups believed that regular reports on conditions could help them maintain pressure on the precinct commanders for intensive police coverage.

Planners and developers attending these meetings also expressed the belief that street use data could be used to assist the city's economic development efforts. A good revitalization plan requires the coordinated efforts of private investors, community and business groups, and public agencies. To maintain interest and involvement in the beginning phases of such projects, these groups need indicators of overall progress. Reports which described where and how street conditions had changed, coupled with information on economic development activities (new construction, conversions, subway upgrading, theater activities, land use change, etc.) could provide a comprehensive picture of change.



## Design of the System

We officially secured funding in late April and began work on May 1, 1979. From the earlier work, we had concluded that it was technically possible to collect data on street conditions. It was now imperative that the kind of data, the manner in which it was collected, the frequency of measurement, and the manner of reporting be organized and produced in a way that was reliable, trusted, and operationally meaningful to the police.

### Defining Conditions

From a review of the plans for Operation Crossroads and from preliminary discussions with Chiefs Courtenay, Kerins, and Colangelo, we learned that street use, from the police perspective, is composed of pedestrian, stationary, and loitering activities. It is the loitering activity that the police refer to as "conditions." The police discussed street condition problems in both precincts and the range of responses to these problems. Project staff toured the areas on regular day and evening patrols to glean additional information on cues used by uniformed and plainclothes patrolmen in identifying various categories of activity.

Based on these observations and discussions, we presented a preliminary set of activities and definitions to the police. With the exception of some minor modifications and refinements, these categories held throughout the monitoring period.

We developed codes and definitions for the following general categories of activity:

pedestrian activity: all persons passing the observers (who were stationed at a fixed point). We hoped to get a measure of the relative volume of pedestrian flow and the extent to which the block was used or avoided as a thoroughfare. The number of females and the number of family groups/couples were also counted and would serve as indicators of positive use and restored public confidence in the area.

loitering activity: all persons engaged in solicitation for prostitution or drugs, use of drugs, drinking, illegal peddling, and other problems targeted by the police for enforcement.

stationary activity: all persons engaged in activity considered to be legitimate, purposeful reasons for waiting in the area. Examples of stationary activity would be waiting on a movie line, using the phone, waiting for a bus or cab, or windowshopping.

We expected that these categories would be expanded, redefined and delimited with field experience and at the request of police managers.

### **Developing Forms and Procedures**

We began monitoring the target area with three observers and used a relatively unstructured list of the common sense categories of activity used by people in describing the area. As observers spent more time in

the field, these categories became more structured and the definitions of activity and cues for recognition more explicit. We needed codes for every activity we were likely to encounter, and detailed, if arbitrary, procedures for conducting the inventory. Some examples: What did we do if we saw the same person twice on the same block? (We decided to avoid counting the same person twice as much as possible.) Did we count someone standing in a parking lot? (We set an arbitrary distance of ten feet in from the building line for coding purposes.) Did we count shoeshine stands as peddlers? (No.)

Initially, we tried to include in the categorization an indication of the qualitative aspect of the activity. "A" activities were those which "blended into the street scene" and "B" activities were those which, in the opinion of the observer, were threatening, menacing, or assaultive. A derelict sleeping in a corner might be "A"; the same man urinating in the street or shouting obscenities would be "B." Because many of these "A/B" distinctions were too subjective, and interobserver reliability, i.e., agreement between observers on ratings, was low, we discontinued this aspect of the monitoring system.

The first structured data collection form is presented in Figure 1. After observers had memorized codes and definitions, we introduced a supplementary data collection form. Form 2 (page 21) was a schematic blockface map onto which the observer coded

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

STREET SURVEY

LOCATION \_\_\_\_\_ WEATHER \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF WEEK \_\_\_\_\_ OBSERVERS \_\_\_\_\_

(1) (2) (3)

PEDESTRIAN COUNT	:	:	:	TOTAL	AVERAGE	RATE/MIN
MALES						
not accompanied by female M (10-30)						
FEMALES						
TOTAL						
FAMILIES/COUPLES						

Personal solicitations

PART I	A	B	TOTAL	PART II	A	B	TOTAL	G
Prostitute				P				
DS drug sale				DS				
DV derelict/alcoholic				DV				
D drinking, using drugs				D				
M/G monte/gamblers				M/G				
V/P vendors/peddlers				V				
F flyboys				F				
H hawker, canvasser				H				
BL bag lady/troubled person				BL				
OL other loiterers				OL				
TOTAL L				TOTAL L				

First Half of Block		Second Half of Block	
PART I	PART II	PART I	PART II
EMPLOYEES		STAT FOOT	
TOURISTS		MOVE FOOT	
WAIT/QUEUE		PARKED	
AUDIENCE		MOUNTED	
OS other stationary		MOVING VEH.	
TOTAL S tationary		TOTAL P olice	

Figure 1

LOCATION \_\_\_\_\_  
 DATE \_\_\_\_\_ / DAY \_\_\_\_\_ 06 = A1 40 (9/8) S  
 TIME \_\_\_\_\_ / WEATHER \_\_\_\_\_  
 CODER \_\_\_\_\_

PED. COUNT	1	2
MALES		
FEMALES		
FAMILIES/COUPLES		
UNACCOMP. FEMALES		

PRIMARY	PED	STAT
P		
C		
TV		
DS		
DV		
DG		
DK		
M/G		
V/P		
V/F		
F		
H		
BL		
OL		
E		
T		
W/Q		
A		
OS		
SF		
MF		
PC		
MP		
MV		

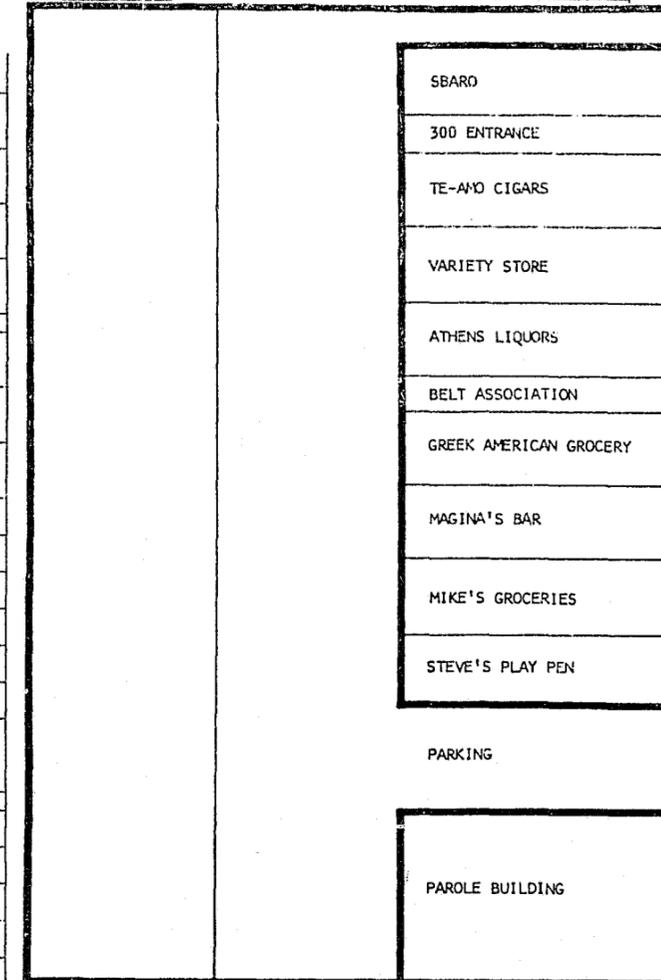


Figure 2

activity where it occurred. By mapping the location of activities, we would be able to respond to the questions of the Midtown Enforcement Project regarding establishments which were thought to be contributing to conditions on a blockface.

The following data collection procedure evolved: for short blocks the observer team would travel the length of the block systematically recording the number, type, and location of stationary, loitering, and police activity on the block from corner to corner. Then standing still at midblock, the observers conducted the pedestrian inventory on handcounters. They took two two-minute counts of each category of pedestrian activity: total males, total females, family groups/couples and unaccompanied females. Pedestrian rates per minute were subsequently calculated. On the long blocks the observers conducted a three-minute pedestrian count from two fixed points, one-third of the way in from the end of the block. The stationary inventory was identical to that for the short blocks except that activities on the corners were not included in the inventory. Observers would spend between five and ten minutes coding a block.

### **Scheduling Decisions**

From the pilot work of the previous summer and from discussions with the police, we knew that street use was affected by many variables such as time of day, day of week, and weather conditions. Given our limited observer resources, we decided to isolate some key variables. First,

we concentrated on monitoring evening activity during the hours when deployment is most intense, i.e., between 6:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m. We limited observations to two evenings a week, thus allowing a comparison of conditions on an evening thought to be the most busy (Saturday) vs. an evening when activity was believed to be slower (Tuesday). The pilot work indicated that conditions changed by time of night. Therefore, we chose a schedule which would allow us to observe the same block once early in the evening and later the same night. In the event of rain, observations were cancelled for all or part of the evening.

### **Observers and Instruments**

The observers were undergraduate and graduate students from a variety of backgrounds and included students of art, literature, social science, and business. Although most had no formal training in research methods, they all shared a natural curiosity about the Times Square area and an interest in studying it in a systematic way. We were successful at recruiting both males and females from a variety of racial backgrounds.

Three part-time observers assisted in the initial development and testing of instruments and procedures and then helped in orientation of new teams. In total, over the course of the summer, we trained 11 observers. On any given evening, we had, at most, three two-person teams in the field.

New observers were first introduced to data collection forms and procedures through a training session in the

office. They would then spend two practice evenings in the company of an experienced field team during which they were given the opportunity to code activity and compare their observations with those of the experienced team. We found there was a definite training effect: observers did become better, i.e., more standardized and more reliable, with practice. They also developed an understanding of the area and the cues used in identifying activity.

### **Questions of Reliability**

Interobserver reliability became a concern as soon as we had more than one team out in the field. Several means of testing and insuring reliability were developed. To guard against individual or team idiosyncracies in coding, we systematically rotated partners so that each observer worked with every other observer during a given month. One of the original observers was designated as Field Manager, with responsibilities for scheduling and supervising all data collection activity. In conjunction with these responsibilities, the Field Manager routinely accompanied observer teams on their evening assignments, correcting any inconsistencies or irregularities in coding. These two measures--partner rotation and close field supervision--served to standardize definitions and frames of reference.

In addition to the field tests of interobserver reliability, we developed paper and pencil tests of hypothetical descriptions of street activity and asked observers to code these situ-

ations. The tests were administered twice to all observers and served not only to correct observer errors but also to fine tune the cues for identifying activities.

### **The Safety Factor**

Safety remained a concern throughout the field work. The area is unpredictable and we knew that street crimes were fairly common there. We had concluded from the pilot test that we could safely send observers into the area, but as a precaution, we organized the data collection so that observers always worked in teams of two. We also emphasized the importance of being alert to sudden changes in the mood of the street and instructed them to skip a block if they felt threatened. There were three such incidents over the course of six months (more than 50 nights) of field observation. Twice the observers encountered fights on blocks to be rated and chose not to monitor these blocks; in the third incident, a stranger hit one of the observers in the face with a newspaper for no apparent reason. The assailant ran off into the crowd, leaving the observer stunned but not hurt. The team quickly left the block and proceeded on the scheduled route.

### **"Here Come the Clickers"**

An obvious methodological question in any field study is the extent to which researchers influence the people and events under study. The methods we used, while not directly interfering in the street activi-

ties, were not hidden. The observers carried clipboards and made notations openly. Often they were stopped by passersby and Times Square regulars who asked them what they were doing. Their standard response was that they were doing a survey of the area for a school project. That response satisfied even the most persistent. None of the observers felt that their presence changed the activities on the street. Winos did not stop drinking, loiterers did not disperse, monte games did not break up.

After a few weeks, the observers became accepted as regulars in the area. One particular anecdote illustrates the general live-and-let-live attitude of the street people toward the observers: A prostitute stopped the observer team and asked what they were doing.

"We're counting people."

"Are you counting hookers?"

"Yes."

"Well, I'm a hooker. Don't forget to count me."

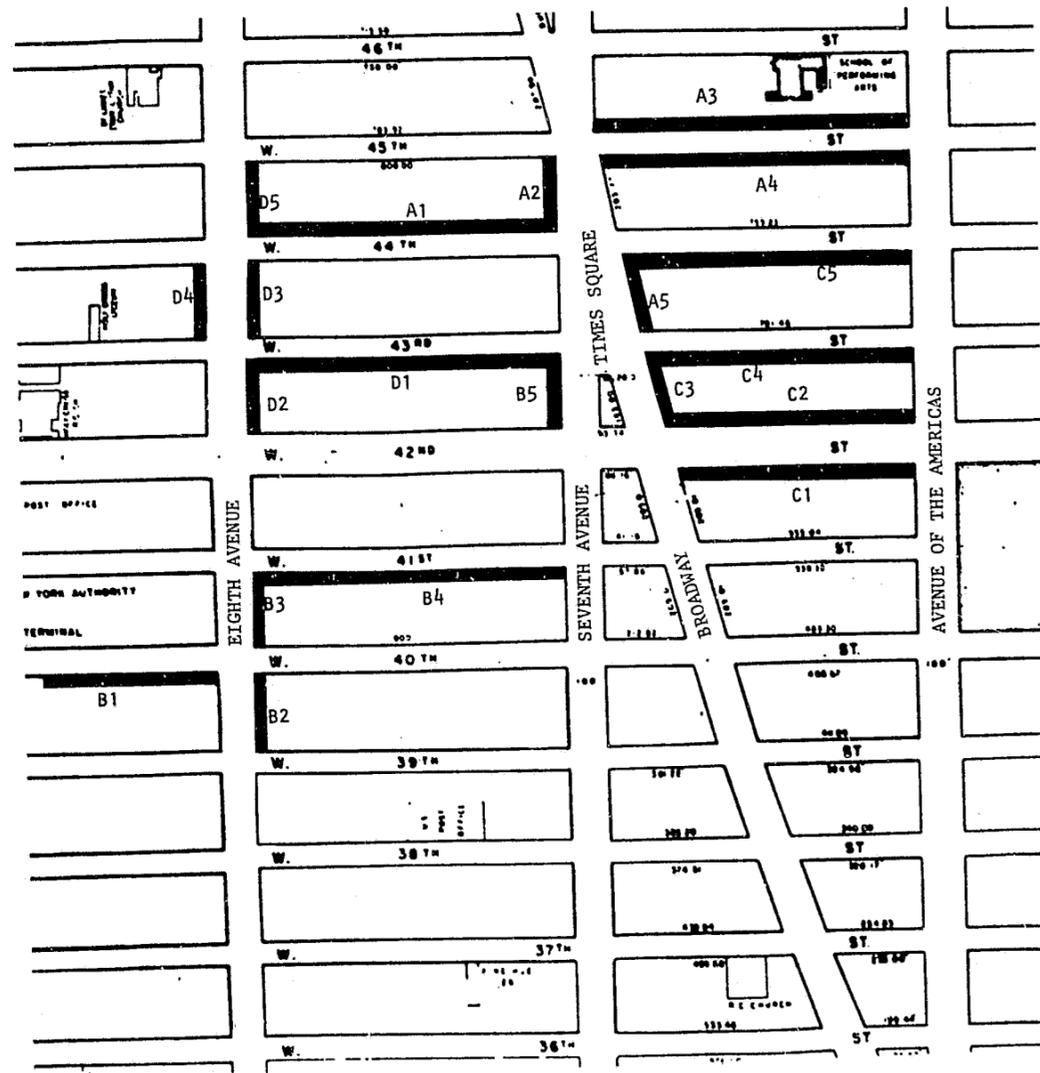
For a core group of area "regulars," the observers became as familiar to them as they were to us. "Here come the clickers," was a familiar greeting. (Observers carried hand clickers for the pedestrian count.)

## Collecting the Data: Ways and Means

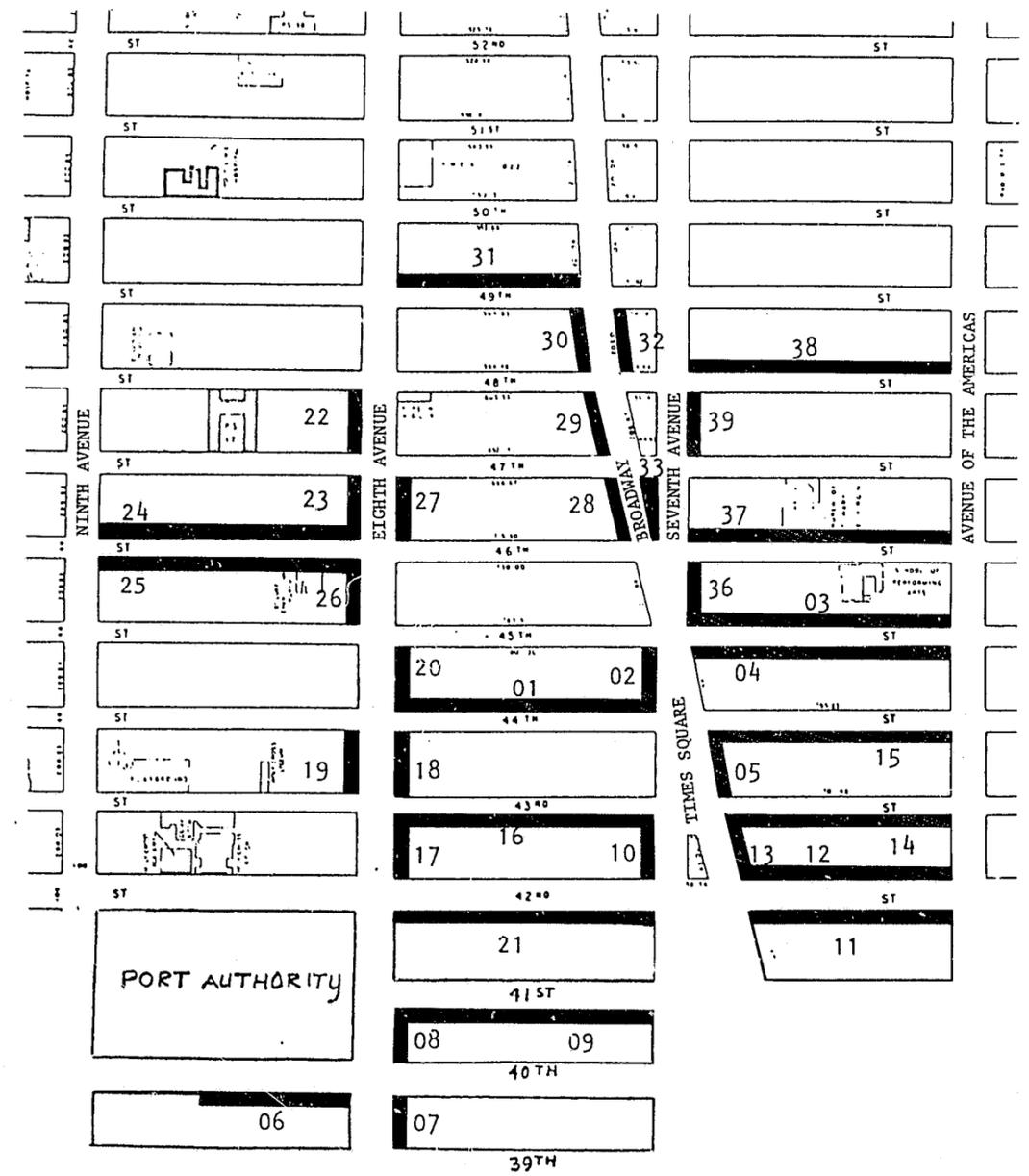
Observers met every Tuesday and Saturday at the Midtown South precinct at 5:30 p.m. to prepare for the evening's observations. The commanding officer provided the use of a room and a locker to store clipboards, forms, and hand counters. Teams would start out from the precinct in time to arrive at the first scheduled blockface by 6:00 p.m. At 10:30 p.m. all observers gathered for their half-hour break at Nathan's, a 24-hour fast food restaurant. The evening ended at 12:30 a.m., at the precinct where one observer assembled the completed data collection forms and returned them to the office on the following day for data entry.

Data collection schedules and procedures were revised three times. Each phase is discussed below.

Phase I began in the middle of June and ended at the end of July. The main purposes of Phase I were to test observation categories, procedures, and schedules, and to set up the field operation on a small-scale in one precinct before expanding into both midtown precincts. During Phase I, we observed 20 police-designated blockfaces. (See map on page 28.) Blockfaces were not randomly sampled; police selected those blocks that they were interested in, some with severe problems and others without. We used four observers in two two-person foot teams to code these 20 blockfaces. On any



Blockfaces Monitored During Phase I of Data Collection



Blockfaces Monitored During Phase II of Data Collection

given Tuesday and Saturday, each blockface was observed twice, once before 9:00 p.m. and once after 9:00 p.m.

Phase II began on August 1st and ended in the middle of November. We were now confident that the monitoring was reliable, and we were ready to increase the number of monitored blockfaces and begin reporting on street conditions. During Phase II, we observed 37 blockfaces: 21 in Midtown South (we had added "The Apple"--42nd Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues--which was widely acknowledged to be among the worst of the blocks) and 16 in Midtown North Precinct (see the map on page 29). Six observers in three foot teams of two made observations every Tuesday and Saturday. Each blockface was observed once before 9:00 p.m. and once after 9:00 p.m.

Phase III began in the middle of November and ended at the end of the year. Because of the colder weather, we investigated the feasibility of making observations from automobiles. If car ratings were feasible, we would easily be able to monitor other areas where conditions were more dispersed than they are in Times Square. To test the reliability of car ratings, we sent one foot team and one car team out in the field to rate blockfaces in tandem. On some blocks, the car team missed some activity observed by the foot team because of poor lighting, traffic congestion, or visual obstructions. Those 15 blocks deemed inappropriate for car ratings continued to be rated by a foot team. The remaining 20 blockfaces became part

of the car route. (Two blockfaces in Midtown North were eliminated from the sample.)

During Phase III, we observed a total of 35 blockfaces. Four observers, two in a foot team and two in a car team, made observations every Tuesday and Saturday. Each blockface was observed three times: once between 6:00 and 8:00 p.m., once between 8:30 and 10:30 p.m., and a third time between 11:00 p.m. and 1:00 a.m.

Table 1 summarizes the resources and direct operating costs for an average evening of field work during each phase.

TABLE 1

	Phase I June 19-July 31	Phase II Aug.1-Nov.15	Phase III Nov.16-Dec.31
# blockfaces observed	20	37	35
# observations per blockface	2	2	3
# observer man-hrs.	28	35	22.5
# field manager hrs.	--	10	10
manpower costs per evening	\$168	\$295	\$220
cost of car rental	--	--	\$40
total costs per average evening	\$168	\$295	\$260

Appendix I contains a brief description of categories and definitions used in the street condition inventory.



## Monthly Reports

In July we began processing the data collected on the sample blocks using computer programs designed by project analysts. These programs included quality control measures to insure error-free data entry.

By the end of August we were confident that the data collection was reliable, and we were ready to begin reporting. Our ultimate goal was to design separate reports to meet a variety of needs. Our approach was first to get the data out in simple summary form; then to design a standardized reporting format, and finally to present the data in a format that would highlight exceptional changes over time.

The cover page of the final generation of monthly reports is presented on page 38, and is the end product of several months of meetings and discussions. We used the monthly meetings of the Police Midtown Task Force as a forum for presenting data and soliciting comments from Borough, Zone, and Precinct commanders and representatives from the Organized Crime Control Bureau, Public Morals Division, and the Midtown Enforcement Project.

## Format Evolution

We first began disseminating street condition data in September, presenting very simple aggregations of July and August data. That computer-generated report presented monthly averages for each category of activity measured for each blockface. We prepared separate reports comparing Tuesday to Saturday monthly averages, and others comparing early evening to late evening averages.

The size of these reports made them unwieldy for presentation, but they were a necessary first step in summarizing and highlighting the data. We were able to see which categories of activity appeared with sufficient frequency to warrant a separate category, which could be aggregated, and which could be eliminated. We were able to use the first reports to solicit feedback from the police on what they did want in a report.

The second generation report was more concise. In addition to presenting monthly averages, we ranked all blockfaces by monthly averages for those conditions of particular interest to the police (i.e., prostitution, drug selling, drug use/drinking, total loiterers, police instance, and pedestrian activity). We noted the top ten and bottom ten blockfaces for each category, and highlighted the highest three and lowest three of these blockfaces.

## Raising Questions

The September report, unlike previous summaries of information given to the police, evoked special interest as well as requests for further details on definitions and procedures. Certain information in that report merely confirmed what the police already knew. No one was surprised, for example, that 42nd Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues ranked first in all categories. But other information (for instance, the high level of prostitution on 43rd Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues) was contrary to police perceptions.

The first response of the police was to question the reliability and validity of the information. Coding criteria that were previously accepted without question were critically examined for the first time. We were able to use this critical response constructively to clarify questions about method, to fine tune definitions of activity, and to structure the form and content of a regular monthly report.

Based on responses to the previous reports, we concluded that a regular monthly report would have to meet the following objectives:

- Provide summary information which would provoke additional questions to be answered in greater detail.
- Document change over time so that conditions on a particular block could be compared to a previous time period.

--Highlight exceptional changes, i.e., those changes calculated as "statistically significant."

--Place conditions on individual blocks in the context of conditions in the area as a whole and compare them to other blocks.

We were dissatisfied with the use of monthly averages as the sole means of summarizing conditions. The concept of monthly averages for each activity was inadequate for highlighting differences between blockfaces and changes in a blockface from month to month. In responding to a question from Dennis Ryan, commander of the Midtown South Precinct, we discovered a new way of organizing and analyzing the data. When Ryan reviewed information presented in the September report of ranked blockfaces, he was surprised that four blocks making up one foot post appeared to have such different police coverage. In a memorandum to Chief Kerins, he asked for a detailed breakdown of police instance on these blocks.

Inspector Ryan was really questioning the relative likelihood of seeing the officers on certain blocks in the four-block post as opposed to others. In response, we computed the number of times out of all of the observations made on a block during the month that we saw at least one instance<sup>1</sup> of uniformed police presence. We then presented this calculation as a percentage. Thus on one block

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<sup>1</sup>A pair of officers walking together was counted as one instance of police presence.

in the post, the likelihood of seeing at least one uniformed police instance was 81% and on another it was 0%. This way of presenting the data made sense to the police and to us. We realized that "percent of observations with one or more" could also be used to describe conditions and changes in conditions over time. Moreover, we could highlight those improvements or declines in conditions found to be statistically significant.

### **The Final Format**

In the October report, we structured a format which would make use of the concept "percent of observations with one or more" and ranked blockfaces according to the amount they had changed from October to the previous two months. The monthly report format allowed the police to review conditions on an individual blockface in the context of the other locations. The police could also compare the current month's conditions on a single blockface to conditions from the previous two months. We highlighted exceptional increases and decreases in street conditions which were of particular concern to the police, e.g., overall loitering, prostitution, drug selling, and peddling. We also highlighted exceptional changes in police visibility based on our observations of the instances of uniformed police presence. November and December data were cast in a similar monthly report format.

STREET CONDITIONS MONTHLY SUMMARY, DECEMBER 1979

I.D.#	LOCATION	CHANGE IN AVERAGE # OF LOITERERS	AVERAGE TOTAL LOITERERS FOR DECEMBER 1979	AVERAGE TOTAL LOITERERS FOR OCT./NOV. '79	DEC. RANKING	OCT./NOV. RANKING	EXCEPTIONAL CHANGE <sup>1</sup>		POLICE INSTANCE	CHARACTERISTICS	
							DRUG PROS.	SELLERS PEDDLERS		TOTAL LOITERERS	PED.FLOW
01	44 (8/7)N	+0.2	0.6	0.4	(31)	(35)				Mod.	37.2
20	8 (44/45)E	0.0	1.1	1.1	(25)	(34)				Mod.	24.5
32	Bway (49/48)E	-0.2	1.1	1.3	(23)	(30)				Mod.	28.3
12	42 (6/Bway)N	-0.5	6.4	6.9	(4)	(9)			(-)	Mod.	19.7
37	46 (7/6)N	-0.5	0.6	1.1	(28)	(33)			(-)	Low	30.4
39	7 (48/47)E	-0.5	1.8	2.3	(19)	(23)			(+)	High	25.7
15	44 (6/Bway) S	-0.6	0.7	1.3	(29)	(29)				Low	34.5
25	46 (8/9)S	-0.6	1.1	1.7	(24)	(28)			(-)	Low	28.9
19	8 (43/44)W	-0.6	2.6	3.2	(14)	(20)	(-)			Mod.	19.3
18	8 (43/44)E	-0.7	3.3	4.0	(11)	(17)				Mod.	18.8
24	46 (9/8)N	-0.7	0.6	1.3	(30)	(31)			(-)	Low	28.4
36	7 (45/46)E	-0.7	1.1	1.8	(23)	(25)		(-)	(-)	High	30.3

<sup>1</sup>The % of observations with one or more prostitutes, drug sellers, etc. for December has been compared against the same percentage for the two prior months. Only those differences that are statistically significant (i.e., those where we can be at least 80% confident that the difference is not due to chance) are highlighted as exceptional. A (-) indicates an exceptional decrease and a (+) an exceptional increase from the previous period. Note that the comparison is being made between monthly percentages for each category and not between the averages.

## Areawide Changes

Having amassed a data base over the course of five months of field observation (August-December), we were able to review area-wide and precinct-wide changes over time. We were struck by the remarkable stability of conditions during the fall months in the area as a whole. It was not until December and the onset of colder weather that we began to detect significant decreases in conditions. There were some surprises:

- Drug selling remained relatively stable and seemed impervious to weather changes. Area-wide, we noted drug selling activity in at least 10% of our observations.
- Peddler activity declined significantly in December (the month usually associated with heavy peddling activity because of the large number of Christmas shoppers). This December, however, the police exercised new enforcement powers including confiscation of peddler goods. The impact appears to be reflected in the data.
- Police visibility in the area as a whole decreased steadily over the five month period. In August, we observed at least one instance of uniformed foot patrol in 35% of our observations, in October the percentage had dropped to 25%, and by December we were observing uniformed patrol in 16% of the observations.
- In general, while loitering appears to be more of a problem on Saturday nights than it is on Tuesday nights (this generalization is as true for August as it is for December), there appear to be no significant differences for prostitution and drug selling between the

weekday and weekend nights for all months except August. In August, we observed prostitution solicitation in 57% of the observations on Saturday nights and in 36% on Tuesday nights.

### Concentration of Activity/Street Use

When people speak about Times Square, they generally think of the area as a whole and praise it or damn it accordingly. We learned from our observations, however, that many of the activities thought to be assaultive or menacing are concentrated on a handful of blocks, yet effectively color the entire area. Some examples:

--A common perception is that there is a large population of bag ladies and derelicts who frequent the Times Square area. An analysis of the street use data covering the period from August through December indicates that they are relatively few in number and tend to be concentrated on a few blocks. We found that 14 out of 37 blocks accounted for more than 50% of those observed. The average number per evening over the five month period was 5.2 derelicts and bag ladies in contrast to 17 vendor/peddlers. One possible explanation of the public's perception is that the blocks where they concentrate can be generally characterized as having high pedestrian volumes.

--Ten of the 37 blocks observed during August through October accounted for more than 70% of all prostitutes (males and females) observed. Twenty-nine percent of the total observed were concentrated on two blocks. On a monthly basis, these two blocks consistently ranked one and two in total number of prostitutes.

### Police Visibility

One of the main objectives of Crossroads was to maintain high visibility of uniformed foot patrol. Observations over the three month period from August through October revealed differences in police visibility by day of week. Analysis of the data also revealed some interesting relationships between police presence and negative street conditions:

--The percentage of observations in which we observed one or more uniformed police officers differed Tuesdays compared to Saturdays during the August-October period. On Tuesdays we saw uniformed police in 32% of our observations compared to 26% on Saturdays during the three months. In contrast, average pedestrian rates for each night during the period confirmed that the number of people in Times Square on Saturday nights was greater than Tuesdays. The average area-wide pedestrian flow for Saturday was 32 persons per minute compared to 22 persons per minute on Tuesday evenings.

--Generally speaking, uniformed police were deployed on blocks with the highest levels of negative use. Of ten blocks ranked highest in total negative use for August through October, seven of these blocks also ranked among the top ten in total police presence. There were, however, three notable exceptions. Those blocks which ranked third, fourth, and fifth in total negative use ranked 26th, 23rd, and 18th respectively in uniformed police presence.

# Special Reports

The monthly reports previously described summarized conditions and presented changes over time. We expected that these reports would prompt the police to request more detailed information on specific locations. When police asked for details, we prepared special reports to answer their questions. In addition, we generated special analyses to emphasize particular problems that emerged from the data. Some examples of these special reports are the following:

- Special Report on a Problem Establishment

One bar on 42nd Street between Sixth and Broadway was a magnet for groups of menacing loiterers. Pedestrians would cross the street to avoid harassment. When the bar closed for alterations, we had an excellent opportunity to assess the impact of that establishment on the street conditions of the block. Overall loitering and drug use/drinking decreased dramatically with the closing and we plotted this change over time. The precinct commander believed this type of data would be valuable in convincing other authorities of the harmful effect of particular establishments. In particular, he proposed using

such data as evidence for the State Liquor Authority, which grants and revokes liquor licenses.

At the same time that the bar closed, we detected an increase in loitering on the adjacent 43rd Street block. We could not say definitively that this increase was due to displacement; however, we alerted the police and the Midtown Enforcement Project to possible displacement locations.

- Special Report in Response to Police Request for Further Elaboration of Monthly Report

The commander of the Midtown North Precinct asked us for more details on prostitution activity on two Eighth Avenue blocks. He was surprised that the problem was significantly greater on one block when theoretically, police coverage was the same. To respond to this question, we presented details for each night of observation and prepared a composite map noting a symbol for every observation of prostitution activity for the month of September. Indeed, the activity was more intense on one block and appeared to be clustered near one hotel.

- Special Report to Verify Public Complaints

Police had been receiving complaints from theater groups of an increase in prostitution along Eighth Avenue after 11:00 p.m. and asked us to review the data. We confirmed the reports of an increase, thus supporting the decision to devote additional enforcement efforts after 11:00 p.m.

## Bryant Park Demonstration

The street condition reports were not viewed as a resource for planning until December when we had an opportunity to use the street monitoring capability to assess effectiveness of increased drug enforcement in Bryant Park. The park had become dominated by a group of very aggressive drug sellers who openly displayed their wares and actively solicited anyone entering the park. Troubled by these conditions and disturbed about media attention, Parks Commissioner Gordon Davis threatened to close Bryant Park because, he claimed, the police were not able to control the drug problem.

The request for monitoring came through the Parks Department. A preliminary meeting held with Deputy Parks Commissioner French then led to meetings with the Midtown Enforcement Project and representatives from precinct, zone, and headquarters. Rather than close the park, Parks and Police agreed to a program of intensive drug enforcement activity and asked the Fund to monitor conditions. We viewed the Bryant Park assignment as an opportunity to test some assumptions about future directions for the monitoring capability. Thus far there had been little police interest in using the monthly reports as a resource for planning and evaluation. The Bryant Park situation was different--the police had a specific problem to address (drug selling), they were changing their enforcement strategy for a discrete period of time, and (partly because of the political pressure brought to bear by

Parks) they needed an objective means of assessing change. Police are often faced with "special" enforcement demands such as the Bryant Park example; we believed that the probability of use of the information would be enhanced with a monitoring capability that was more flexible and could be adapted to monitor special initiatives in areas beyond Times Square.

In addition, the Bryant Park situation presented a critical ingredient missing from the previous monitoring efforts--an outside pressure group with access to the information produced. We believed that this external pressure might also enhance the probability of police use. At the end of the Bryant Park work, we would assess the level of police commitment to using the monitoring capability and decide whether continued Fund investment was warranted.

During a five-week period, nearly 200 undercover narcotics arrests were made in the park. The Fund monitored conditions before enforcement began and during the five-week period. Findings are summarized below:

- There was an overall decrease in the number of people engaged in both positive activity and drug related activity. The number of positive users decreased by 79%; the number of drug sellers, buyers, and users decreased by 85%.
- The percentage of loitering and drug related use as a function of total use decreased from 67% to 49%. The Narcotics Division was surprised that this percentage did not decrease more dramatically.

--Drug selling did not displace en masse to any single location in the immediate area.

--While the decrease in numbers was not as dramatic as the police anticipated, the behavior of drug sellers became much more discrete.

--The aggressiveness of uniformed patrol, not just the fact that an officer was in the park, appeared to be a key factor in changing the drug sellers' modus operandi.

--Supervised, directed patrol, rather than the absolute number of officers assigned, seemed critical to affecting conditions in the park.

--Stationing a uniformed officer in front of the library during lunchtime and early afternoon virtually eliminated the thick and active clustering of drug activity.

When we presented the Bryant Park results to Parks and Police, all parties, including the Fund, were pleased. The Parks Department was satisfied because the data demonstrated that the police could clean up the park if they had a commitment to doing so. The police were satisfied because they now had an objective outcome measure against which deployment and arrest input could be evaluated. Furthermore, the results of this objective assessment indicated that their operation was a success and they could reassign resources until Parks put pressure on again in the spring. After the results were presented, the Narcotics Division returned to Harlem, the precinct sergeant went back to his night-time tour, and the precinct commander promised to maintain some police presence unless other priorities

arose. We were pleased because the monitoring system as applied to a specific problem seemed to meet a police need for information. Moreover, we had learned how to transfer the monitoring procedures established in Times Square to a different setting. The interest generated from the Bryant Park assessment did not, however, generate additional experimentation or special analyses.

### Plans for Continued Development

As stated earlier, the original expectation for the project was that it would take three years to nurture the monitoring system from the stage of interesting idea to that of implemented management information system. In December, we submitted a plan and budget for year two to CJCC. The principal focus of the second year's work was the use of the data in structured experimentation. We proposed to continue the routine monitoring of the Times Square area, building a data base for use not only in monitoring street conditions but also in assessing the effects of deployment changes. In addition, prompted by the interest in the Bryant Park special assessment, we proposed to extend monitoring beyond the Times Square area and to use the capability to assess special police initiatives in other boroughs.

Having drafted the second year plan, we sought to assess police interest and readiness in using the capability in the planning and evaluation of future deployment decisions, thereby insuring its use and justifying further investments on the part of CJCC,

the Fund, and others in its development. Complicating the picture were a series of transfers involving the reassignment of the original cast of police commanders who had been involved in the project from its conception. It was unclear whether the new borough, zone, and precinct commanders shared the same commitment to the development and use of the system as did their predecessors. When we met with the new commanders in February, their assessment was that although the information was interesting, they did not foresee using the monitoring system to assess patrol effectiveness and did not anticipate having the flexibility or resources for new initiatives or deployment experiments. As a result, plans ceased for continuing the project beyond the nine-month CJCC grant period.



## Findings

During the nine-month CJCC contract, the Fund had designed and tested a methodology for measuring street conditions, collected data for six months on 37 blockfaces in the Times Square area, packaged the data in monthly summaries and reported it to the police, issued special reports which highlighted conditions associated with particular locations, and adjusted the method and applied it to assess the impact of special police initiatives.

In undertaking the work described above, we were trying to answer two basic questions:

1. Could we design a reliable and valid measurement capability?
2. Would the police be able to make use of the information, combining it with their own analyses of manpower allocation, to support deployment decisions?

To the first question, the answer is yes.

Over the course of the six-month field operation, the Fund and the police had refined definitions and procedures to yield a method that was reliable (as measured by systematic comparisons of observer coding

decisions) and valid (as measured by the growing confidence of police commanders in the quality of the information produced).

The answer to the second question--were police able to use the information--is more qualified. Although the monthly reports and special analyses generated interest, management use was confined to confirming impressions and decisions internally. For example, the Borough commander was pleased to see that the main theater block was virtually free of conditions and that police visibility was high. When the theater owners complained about coverage, he said, he could use the reports as objective evidence of police commitment. He felt that he might also be able to use the data to justify to community groups why certain blocks remained priorities and why others did not. The precinct commander also confirmed his impression of a supervisory problem on one post where police visibility was exceptionally low and conditions exceptionally intractable. "One cop holds up the wall; his partner holds him up." Although police spoke of using data to justify manning to groups outside the Department (midtown business groups, the League of New York Theaters, Community Boards), the information was not actually put to this use.

In summary, the routine gathering of general street condition data was much less useful to police as management information than had been anticipated. Although the Fund was able to develop a reliable and valid system, the information did not appear to

change or provoke major police deployment decisions. The limited police uses outlined above do not seem to justify the costs of routine reporting. Routine reporting on trends over time in the area as a whole may be of more value to non-police groups such as the Midtown Enforcement Project, the Department of City Planning, and business groups.

### **Emphasis on Special Projects**

The Bryant Park special report came closer than the routine reports in meeting police needs for management information. The Bryant Park data, although it did not generate additional experimentation, was used by the Police to demonstrate the success of an intervention to an outside pressure group, in this case the Parks Department. If the street monitoring idea is pursued, we recommend that the investigators emphasize the "specials" and create a flexible data gathering and reporting capability that is more responsive to the specific decisions faced by police managers. Data collection should revolve around these specific decisions with the police organizing and sustaining experimental interventions.

In addition to the emphasis on specials, we would recommend two other changes in approach which may motivate more active use of street condition information in police decision making. First, street condition data presented in itself is only one part of the decision equation faced by police managers. The investigators

should present the entire analytic package, i.e., street condition data in combination with other input information--costs and manpower allocation. For example, if the Department were interested in a cost-benefit analysis of using a decoy approach to control street prostitution, the investigators would provide street condition information (as measured by increases or decreases in street prostitution in a specific area) lined up against the resources allocated and costs of the decoy arrests. Finally, we conclude that if such management information is to be used, a different level of assistance is required. It is not enough for the investigators to work with the client in project development and data collection. If successful implementation is to occur, the investigator must work with the client in structuring those uses.

### **Limits and Unanswered Questions**

The outcome of the Bryant Park work might have been different, given these changes in our approach. In Bryant Park, we were able to provide the Police and the Parks Departments with a highly relevant set of outcome measures, given the goals of the enforcement initiative. The basic question--would heightened enforcement change patterns of use in the parks?--could best be answered by looking systematically at those changing use patterns, not by relying solely on complaints and arrests. We were able to show evidence of shifting patterns of user mix, but without aligning this information against allocation and costs, and without an agreement about the types of enforcement options under con-

sideration, e.g., using plainclothes arrests on an intermittent schedule, we were not as able to provide the kind of information which would assist the police in future Bryant Park decisions. Some of the most provocative questions remained unanswered, for example:

--How long would it take for the old drug selling patterns to reemerge in the absence of heavy narcotics enforcement?

--When would it be necessary to bring the Narcotics Division back to the park?

--If an intermittent enforcement strategy were effective, how much money would the Department save?

We can only speculate that these changes in approach would have led to greater police interest in pursuing the street monitoring work. Successful implementation would still hinge on the Department's interest in and ability to devote resources to experimentation.

We offer this report as an operating guide to other investigators and Police Departments who wish to undertake outcome measurement in conjunction with deployment experimentation.

# Appendices

## Street Condition Inventory: Categories and Definitions

### Prostitutes

Counted are all female and male prostitutes (including young boys, and transvestites engaged in prostitution). Those purchasing their services--johns--are not counted under this category. Observers count prostitutes during both the stationary and pedestrian inventories.

### Drug Sales

This is a count of drug solicitations and transactions. The observer must either hear the sales offer ("loose joints") or observe the sale. In the drug sales category, observers only count the seller, not the buyer. This activity, like prostitution, is very fluid and the sellers frequently move from place to place on the block. Observers take care to count the seller only once. Drug sales are also counted during both the stationary and pedestrian inventories.

### Drinking/Drug Use

This category includes the use of drugs and public drinking by persons who are loitering on the block. If someone is drinking or using drugs as they are walking down the block, they are not counted. Derelicts who are drinking or part of a "bottle gang" are counted separately under a different category.

### Vendors

Included are all non-food vendors, whether or not they have a cart or stand. Some examples of street sales are clothing, shoes, Polaroid pictures, portraits, and jewelry. Observers also include vendors walking along the block offering "gold" chains for sale, religious proselytizers who are selling perfumes or newspapers, and employees selling from a merchandise bin or clothes rack located on the sidewalk in front of a store. People selling from a parked car or truck are also counted. Newsstand operators, shoe-shine men, and food vendors are counted as employees, not vendors.

### Total Loitering

Included are all persons loitering on the blockface at the time of the observation. Total loiterers includes the four categories described above plus six other loitering categories, including Derelicts/Vagrants, Monte Players/Gamblers, Handbillers, Hawking/

Canvassing, Bag Lady or Man/Troubled Persons, and Other Loitering.

This is a residual category and covers the aimless, purposeless "hanging out" that does not fit the other specific categories.

Distinguished from Other Loitering and not included on the chart in Appendix II are the stationary activities. Police do not view the following stationary activities as contributing negatively to street conditions: Tourists, Employees, Queues, Audiences, and Other Stationary (a residual category used to count persons engaged in activities such as windowshopping, buying from a vendor, etc.).

II

December Monthly Report-Sample Pages

This appendix contains sample pages from the December monthly report which was presented to police commanders. (The 22 page December report summarizing conditions on 35 monitored blockfaces is available from the Fund for the City of New York.) The report is based on observations made on three Saturday and three Tuesday evenings between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 1:00 a.m.

The first two pages describe data computations. The next five pages are excerpts from the complete report. A summary page (page 60) compares overall conditions in December against those for the prior two month period. Sample backup pages (61-64) contain information for specific conditions of concern to the police, i.e., prostitution, drug sellers, peddlers, as well as instances of uniformed police presence. The report highlights "exceptional changes," or those blockfaces that have shown statistically significant increases or decreases for the month of December as compared to the previous two months.

I.D.#	LOCATION	CHANGE IN AVERAGE # OF LOITERERS	AVERAGE TOTAL LOITERERS FOR DECEMBER 1979	AVERAGE TOTAL LOITERERS FOR OCT./NOV. '79	DEC. RANKING	OCT./NOV. RANKING	DRUG PROS. SELLERS	EXCEPTIONAL CHANGE <sup>1</sup> TOTAL	POLICE INSTANCES	CHARACTERISTICS PED. FLOW & FEMALE
										<p><u>% Females:</u> Females and males are counted separately during the pedestrian survey. To determine the percent female, the average rate per minute for females is derived in the same way as described above for pedestrian flow. The rate per minute for females is then divided by the total pedestrian rate per minute to arrive at the percent female.</p> <p><u>Blockface Characteristics:</u></p> <p><u>Pedestrian Flow:</u> The pedestrian volume is based on a calculation of the average rate per minute. It is computed by first determining the rate per minute for pedestrian counts taken for a single blockface observation and then arriving at an average for all Tuesdays and all Saturdays. The two day of the week rates are then averaged to arrive at the monthly pedestrian figure. The rates for all blockfaces were analyzed and the following ranges determined:</p> <p>Low: less than or equal to 10 pedestrians per minute.            Mod: greater than 10 and less than or equal to 30 pedestrians per minute            High: greater than 30 and less than or equal to 55 pedestrians per minute.            Very High: greater than 55 pedestrians per minute.</p> <p><u>Exceptional Change:</u> On the next page, we describe the notion of "% OF OBSERVATIONS WITH ONE OR MORE..." This section compares the "% OF OBSERVATIONS WITH ONE OR MORE..." for December with that for October/November. Only those differences that are statistically significant (i.e., those where we can be at least 80% confident that the difference is not due to chance) are highlighted.</p> <p><u>Oct./Nov. Ranking:</u> The blockfaces were rank ordered by the October/November average number of loiterers observed on each.</p> <p><u>December Ranking:</u> All blockfaces were rank ordered by the average total loiterers for the month. The block with the greatest average number of loiterers would be ranked number one. If blocks were tied for a rank they were all assigned the same numerical rank.</p> <p><u>Average total loiterers-Oct./Nov. 1979:</u> This average was computed by first averaging Tuesdays and Saturdays for Oct., averaging Tuesdays and Saturdays for November and then averaging the two monthly averages together.</p> <p><u>Average total loiterers-December 1979:</u> This average is based on all three Tuesday and three Saturday observations conducted during the month of December. All averages have been rounded off to the first decimal place.</p> <p><u>Change in average number of loiterers:</u> Based on the change in average loitering between December observations and those of the prior two months, all 35 blockfaces are listed in order of the magnitude of change. Those blocks on which loitering increased in December are listed first; those blocks showing decreases are listed last.</p>

PROSTITUTION

I.D.#	LOCATION	DEC. 1979		OCT./NOV. 1979		NOV. 1979	OCT./NOV. 1979
		CHANGE IN AVERAGE # OF PROSTITUTES	AVERAGE # PROSTITUTES (RANK)	AVERAGE # PROSTITUTES (RANK)		% OF OBSERVATIONS WITH ONE OR MORE PROSTITUTE	% OF OBSERVATIONS WITH ONE OR MORE PROSTITUTE

% Observations with one or more: The "% of observations with one or more" is determined for any given time period by dividing the number of times a blockface had at least one prostitute (drug seller, etc.,) by the total number of times that blockface was observed.

## STREET CONDITIONS MONTHLY SUMMARY -- DEC. 1979

Page 1

I.D.#	LOCATION	CHANGE IN AVERAGE # OF LOITERERS	AVERAGE TOTAL LOITERERS FOR DECEMBER 1979	AVERAGE TOTAL LOITERERS FOR OCT./NOV. '79	DEC. RANKING	OCT./NOV. RANKING	EXCEPTIONAL CHANGE <sup>1</sup>		POLICE INSTANCE	CHARACTERISTICS	
							DRUG PROS. SELLERS	PEDDLERS		TOTAL LOITERERS	PED.FLOW
01	44 (8/7)N	+0.2	0.6	0.4	(31)	(35)				Mod.	37.2
20	8 (44/45)E	0.0	1.1	1.1	(25)	(34)				Mod.	24.5
32	Bway (49/48)E	-0.2	1.1	1.3	(23)	(30)				Mod.	28.3
12	42 (6/Bway)N	-0.5	6.4	6.9	(4)	(9)			(-)	Mod.	19.7
37	46 (7/6)N *	-0.5	0.6	1.1	(28)	(33)			(-)	Low	30.4
39	7 (48/47)E*	-0.5	1.8	2.3	(19)	(23)			(+)	High	25.7
15	44 (6/Bway) S	-0.6	0.7	1.3	(29)	(29)				Low	34.5
25	46 (8/9)S *	-0.6	1.1	1.7	(24)	(28)			(-)	Low	28.9
19	8 (43/44)W	-0.6	2.6	3.2	(14)	(20)	(-)			Mod.	19.3
18	8 (43/44)E	-0.7	3.3	4.0	(11)	(17)				Mod.	18.8
24	46 (9/8)N *	-0.7	0.6	1.3	(30)	(31)			(-)	Low	28.4
36	7 (45/46)E *	-0.7	1.1	1.8	(23)	(25)			(-)	High	30.3

<sup>1</sup>The % of observations with one or more prostitutes, drug sellers, etc. for December has been compared against the same percentage for the two prior months. Only those differences that are statistically significant (i.e., those where we can be at least 80% confident that the difference is not due to chance) are highlighted as exceptional. A (-) indicates an exceptional decrease and a (+) an exceptional increase from the previous period. Note that the comparison is being made between monthly percentages for each category and not between the averages.

PROSTITUTION

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I.D.#	LOCATION	CHANGE IN AVERAGE # OF PROSTITUTES	DEC. 1979		OCT./NOV. 1979		NOV. 1979	OCT./NOV. 1979
			AVERAGE # PROSTITUTES	(RANK)	AVERAGE # PROSTITUTES	(RANK)	% OF OBSERVATIONS WITH ONE OR MORE PROSTITUTE	% OF OBSERVATIONS WITH ONE OR MORE PROSTITUTE
39	7 (48/47)E	+0.5	0.5	(15)	0.0	(33)	33	3
08	8 (40/41)E	+0.4	2.7	(1)	2.3	(2)	81	78
18	8 (43/44)E	+0.3	0.9	(6)	0.6	(12)	38	37
21	42 (7/8)S	+0.3	2.5	(2)	2.2	(3)	86	75
30	Bway (48/49)W	+0.2	0.8	(8)	0.6	(14)	48	32
01	44 (8/7)N	0.0	0.0	(24)	0.0	(33)	0	3
06	40 (9/8)S	0.0	0.3	(15)	0.3	(20)	24	25
11	42 (Bway/6)S	0.0	0.2	(18)	0.2	(26)	19	13
22	8 (47/48)W	0.0	0.7	(9)	0.7	(11)	43	45
25	46 (8/9)S	0.0	0.0	(23)	0.0	(32)	5	3
29	Bway (47/48)W	0.0	0.2	(17)	0.2	(25)	19	13
32	Bway (49/48)E	0.0	0.1	(20)	0.1	(28)	14	13

DRUG SELLERS

I.D.#	LOCATION	CHANGE IN AVERAGE # OF DRUG SELLERS	DEC. 1979		OCT./NOV. 1979		DEC. 1979	OCT./NOV. 1979
			AVERAGE # DRUG SELLERS	(RANK)	AVERAGE # DRUG SELLERS	(RANK)	% OF OBSERVATIONS WITH ONE OR MORE DRUG SELLERS	% OF OBSERVATIONS WITH ONE OR MORE DRUG SELLERS
10	7 (42/43)W	+0.7	1.5	(2)	0.8	(2)	62	45
30	Bway (48/49)W*	+0.2	0.4	(6)	0.2	(9)	33	13
03	45 (6/Bway)N	+0.1	0.1	(14)	0.0	(19)	5	3
04	45 (Bway/6)S	+0.1	0.4	(5)	0.3	(5)	24	28
11	42 (Bway/6)S	+0.1	0.1	(4)	0.0	(21)	29	0
28	Bway (46/47)W	+0.1	0.2	(9)	0.1	(13)	19	10
01	44 (8/7)N	0.0	0.0	(16)	0.0	(19)	0	3
02	7 (44/45)W	0.0	0.2	(10)	0.2	(8)	19	13
06	40 (9/8)S	0.0	0.0	(16)	0.0	(20)	0	3
09	41 (8/7)S	0.0	0.0	(16)	0.0	(21)	0	0
14	43 (Bway/6)S	0.0	0.0	(16)	0.0	(21)	0	0
18	8 (43/44)E	0.0	0.1	(14)	0.1	(12)	5	6

\*Exceptional change. See footnote on page 1.

## STREET VENDORS

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I.D.#	LOCATION	CHANGE IN AVERAGE # OF VENDOR/ PEDDLER	DEC. 1979		OCT./NOV. 1979		DEC. 1979	OCT./NOV. 1979
			AVERAGE # VENDOR/PEDDLER	(RANK)	AVERAGE # VENDOR/PEDDLER	(RANK)	% OF OBSERVATIONS WITH ONE OR MORE VENDORS	% OF OBSERVATIONS WITH ONE OR MORE VENDORS
12	42 (6/Bway)N	+0.1	0.1	(12)	0.0	(22)	5	3
27	8 (46/47)E	+0.1	0.1	(12)	0.0	(25)	5	0
01	44 (8/7)N	0.0	0.0	(14)	0.0	(25)	0	0
06	40 (9/8)S	0.0	0.0	(14)	0.0	(22)	0	3
07	8 (39/40)E	0.0	0.0	(14)	0.0	(25)	0	0
09	41 (8/7)S	0.0	0.0	(14)	0.0	(22)	0	3
13	Bway (42/43)E	0.0	0.0	(13)	0.0	(23)	5	3
15	44 (6/Bway)S	0.0	0.0	(14)	0.0	(22)	0	3
17	8 (42/43)E	0.0	0.1	(10)	0.1	(16)	5	16
19	8 (43/44)W	0.0	0.0	(14)	0.0	(24)	0	3
20	8 (44/45)E	0.0	0.0	(14)	0.0	(25)	0	0
22	8 (47/48)W	0.0	0.0	(14)	0.0	(25)	0	0

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UNIFORMED POLICE PRESENCE

I.D.#	LOCATION	CHANGE IN AVERAGE # OF POLICE INSTANCE	DEC. 1979		OCT./NOV. 1979		DEC. 1979	OCT./NOV. 1979
			AVERAGE # POLICE INSTANCE	(RANK)	AVERAGE # POLICE INSTANCE	(RANK)	% OF OBSERVATIONS WITH ONE OR MORE POLICE INSTANCES	% OF OBSERVATIONS WITH ONE OR MORE POLICE INSTANCES
04	45 (Bway/6)S	+0.1	0.2	(15)	0.1	(27)	14	10
36	7 (45/46)E	+0.1	0.2	(14)	0.1	(28)	19	7
11	42 (Bway/6)S	+0.1	0.3	(8)	0.2	(13)	19	19
13	Bway (42/43)E	+0.1	0.2	(11)	0.1	(31)	24	6
01	44 (8/7)N	0.0	0.3	(8)	0.3	(8)	24	28
02	7 (44/45)W	0.0	0.3	(10)	0.3	(12)	24	16
20	8 (44/45)E	0.0	0.0	(20)	0.0	(32)	5	3
22	8 (47/48)W	0.0	0.2	(12)	0.2	(22)	14	17
30	Bway (48/49)W	0.0	0.3	(9)	0.3	(9)	24	32
05	Bway (44/43)E	-0.1	0.0	(21)	0.1	(30)	0	10
06	40 (9/8)S	-0.1	0.0	(20)	0.1	(29)	5	6
07	8 (39/40)E	-0.1	0.0	(21)	0.1	(28)	0	9

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**END**