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Episode 414: [Right to Remain Silent](#)

Sep 10, 2010

Stories about people who have the right to remain silent... but choose not to exercise that right—including police officer Adrian Schoolcraft, who secretly recorded his supervisors telling officers to manipulate crime statistics and make illegal arrests. The Village Voice series that broke Schoolcraft's story, written by Graham Rayman, is [here](#).

Transcript

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Prologue.

Ira Glass

From WBEZ Chicago, it's This American Life distributed by Public Radio International. I'm Ira Glass. And in our show today, we have two stories that have a lot in common, but to explain the many things they have in common right here and now would reveal so many spoilers that I'm going to say very little. Rather than do the kind of introduction I usually do right here, all I'm going to say is that each of these stories centers around some guy, and the guy in each story has the right to remain silent, and he does not exercise that right. Like they say in the movies, he could take the easy way, or he could take the hard way. And each of these guys goes way out of his way to take the hard way, not totally realizing what he's getting into. And let's just get right to it.

Act One. The First Rule of the Apple Store: Don't Talk About the Apple Store.

Ira Glass

Act One. First Rule of the Apple Store: Don't Talk About the Apple Store. At some point or another, you've probably known somebody like this, somebody who can't resist the urge to talk back. Not out of principle, but

out of sheer chemical instinct. It's built into his personality. That's the guy in this first story. Ben Calhoun's the reporter.

Ben Calhoun

The guy in this story, and he'd tell you this himself, he's a sarcastic jerk. He's honest that way. He'll say he has no filter, he has foot in mouth disease, he's a loud mouth, a big mouth. Like, this is how he described getting kicked out of Catholic high school during his sophomore year.

Joe Lipari

I cursed at a nun. My English teacher was a nun, and one day she's screaming at me. Like, "we all know you're just some little thug hoodlum. And I was like, "we all know you're a [BLEEP] bitch." And they were like, "you can't go to school here anymore." And I thought that was kind of ironic, because they preach forgiveness.

Ben Calhoun

So what are some other instances where being like--

Joe Lipari

Being me got me in trouble?

Ben Calhoun

Yeah, well just like-- mouthing off got you in trouble.

Joe Lipari

Every day. I got tons from the army. I got tons from high schools. I got tons from my current school. I got-- relationships, my parents. I don't know, I'm mouthy.

Ben Calhoun

The mouthy guy is a guy named Joe Lipari. And I should probably say, this part of Joe's personality-- it doesn't always play badly for Joe. Like when he was in the army, Joe talked back to a drill sergeant who was telling him to cut off his sideburns. Joe recited the military regulations on sideburn length from memory, which made the sergeant mad, but won over his battalion commander, who became a friend and mentor for Joe. Joe also does stand-up comedy, where mouthiness is encouraged. But those things, the good things-- that's not why we're here. This thing that happened to Joe, it started in September of 2009 when Joe needed a new cell phone.

Joe Lipari

I switched to the iPhone with all my friends. We thought we were cool. And mine just never worked. It would freeze, it would shut off, I would charge it and then I would take it off the charger and immediately the battery would be empty of power. And it would just do all the things a computer should not do.

Ben Calhoun

So Joe made an appointment and went to the Apple Store. The staff did something they said should fixed the problem. And if it didn't, they said, look, just bring it back and we'll give you a totally new phone. The next day, the phone crashed on him again.

Joe Lipari

So right after work, I just go to the Apple Store. I get down there and that place is a zoo. It's a really pretty zoo. And so you get in there, and walk up to the concierge that checks your in and stuff at the Apple Store, the guy in the teal shirt. And any time I go up to any employee at a store I always-- because I've worked in retail many times growing up and whatever else-- I'm always very nice, like, hey how's it going? How you doing? Having a good day? And he's like, what can I do for you? I was like, I was here yesterday. My phone's broken. They told me if I come back with it broken again, they'll just switch it out and give me a new phone. The guy said, do you have an appointment? I said, no, I was here yesterday. They gave me the impression that-- just come and it's good to go. And he said, well, we're kind of busy. It's going to be probably about a two hour wait. I was like, cool. I have a book. I'm going to go sit over here.

Ben Calhoun

So 30 minutes go by. 45 minutes. An hour. Finally, 90 minutes.

Joe Lipari

90 minutes and I'm like, they've got to be calling me soon. And I just went up and was like, look it's been about two hours. Are we getting any closer to me getting up there? So he looks me up and he's like, oh, it's probably going to be about a two hour wait. I was like, I've already been here for two hours. There's no way I'm waiting for four hours. He was like, well if you had an appointment, this wouldn't happen. That's what appointments are for. You get the appointment, and then you get seen. And I was like, slow your roll. And I shoved something off the table and I stormed out.

Ben Calhoun

Joe hopped the subway home to Queens, and the whole way back, even after he got home, he couldn't stop thinking about it.

Joe Lipari

How can I spend \$600 for a thing that does not work? I don't make a lot of money. And so I was kind of steaming, smoking a little pot like you do. It's medicinal, I promise. And I was watching *Fight Club*. *Fight Club* was on TV.

Tyler Durden

I want you to hit me as hard as you can.

Joe Lipari

And I was just watching *Fight Club*, chilling out, trying to calm myself down.

Ben Calhoun

So Joe's on his couch-- a big puffy boat of a couch that presumably used to be white. Joe has his laptop. He's distracting himself by looking at Facebook, and like he said, he's watching *Fight Club*.

Joe Lipari

And the scene from *Fight Club* comes on where Ed Norton's boss walks in with a piece of paper and he's like, I found this in a copy machine. First rule of Fight Club is-- Second rule of Fight-- like, do you know anything about this?

Fight Club Narrator

Well, I gotta tell you, I'd be very, very careful who you talk to about that. Because the person who wrote that is dangerous. And this button-down Oxford cloth psycho might just snap and then stalk from office to office within an ArmaLite AR-10 carbine gas-powered semiautomatic weapon pumping round after round into colleagues and coworkers. This might be someone you've known for years. Someone very, very close to you.

Joe Lipari

I kind of took it and paraphrased it a little bit, and my status was--

Ben Calhoun

Joe's status on Facebook.

Joe Lipari

--and I'm reading it here, Joe Lipari might walk into it Apple Store on Fifth Avenue with an ArmaLite AR-10 gas-powered semiautomatic weapon and pump round after round into one of those smug, fruity little concierges. This may be someone you've known for years, someone very, very close to you.

Ben Calhoun

Just so you know, I did ask Joe about his use of the word fruity here. And he told me that no, it was not homophobic. He was just trying to describe the guy's demeanor.

Joe Lipari

No, I have a gay cousin. I am the least homophobic person in the world.

Ben Calhoun

In any case, he types this thing into Facebook and he posts it. And that's that. For like an hour, he just sits there, feet on the coffee table.

Joe Lipari

And I get a [KNOCKS] 'shave and a haircut, two-bits' knock on the door. And I just think, yay, one of my buddies got in, didn't have to buzz, great.

Ben Calhoun

Joe jumps up, goes to the front door.

Joe Lipari

Yeah, without even looking through the peephole, I swing the door open, kind of go to lean on the door jamb, and that's when I see that there's an officer here, standing right in front of the door, two behind him, and one at the top of the stairs covering the high ground.

Ben Calhoun

These weren't regular, uniformed cops. They were the guys in street clothes, the guys with black bulletproof vests. One of them had a machine gun.

Joe Lipari

All guns drawn, badges out, cliché policemen sunglasses, you know the whole nine yards. And the guy at the door's like, are you Joe Lipari? And I was like, uh, yeah. Well you seem pretty nervous Joe. Well, not every day a guy with an MP5 is knocking on my door. What can I do for you? Is everything OK? And he's like, well you seem to know a lot about guns.

Ben Calhoun

It's worth stopping here. There was a perfectly good explanation for why Joe could identify the officer's machine gun, something called an MP5. Remember, Joe was in the military. He was a marksman in the army. And he could've said that. He probably should have said it. But of course, he didn't.

Joe Lipari

Well, me being a sarcastic jerk, I go, well I watch a lot of Bond movies-- which I giggle, and they don't.

Ben Calhoun

What the officers did do then was searched Joe's apartment. And they were asking him all kinds of confusing questions, like about explosives. And Joe, he was trying to figure out why they were there in the first place.

Joe Lipari

During the week or two before, they had caught some terrorist, or a wannabe terrorist in Queens. So maybe, something in my building, something in the neighborhood, I had no idea. I'm just trying to defuse the situation, make jokes, trying to show these guys-- I'm not trouble. I couldn't be any further from it.

Ben Calhoun

Also remember, while all this is going on, Joe is high. Cops with machine guns are all over his apartment, pulling out drawers and tearing things apart. He has no idea why, and he's totally stoned.

Joe Lipari

The one cop point at the marijuana on the coffee table and kind of snickers. And the other one is like, well, are you a big fan of the reefer? I said, I kind of go through phases if there's a stressful day. And two of them go looking around, and the one stays back with me. And he tries to buddy-buddy with me. He's like, yeah, I

understand. I used to be an alcoholic. And in my mind, I'm like, well it's not really the same thing, but all right. And the one cop comes back. And he's like, do you know what an AR-10 is? And I was like, is that why you're here? I was almost dumbfounded-- in my mind, I'm like how in the hell are the cops here because of Facebook? Of all the dumb things I've done in my life. It's a joke. It's a quote from a movie, guy. The movie's on in the other room. I can rewind it, if you like. And then, the one cop was like, well we need to take you downtown for questioning. Homeland security wants to talk to you. I was like, really?

Ben Calhoun

The cops escorted Joe downstairs and he saw that they weren't alone. They'd actually brought back up. There were two extra police cars with officers waiting, in case the guys with the bulletproof vests and the machine gun needed help. They took Joe to a station in Queens and threw him into an interrogation room.

Joe Lipari

Like in *Batman*, where they leave the Joker. It's the same thing. All blank walls, one mirror, which is probably a two-way, crappy table, crappy chairs, and one guy offers you coffee. And I'm in the interrogating room for a good three, three and a half hours. Just different people questioning me, taking turns with me-- good cop/bad cop, bad cop/bad cop, good cop/good cop.

Ben Calhoun

Joe was sure once he explained the situation, they'd see it was a mistake and everything would shake out. It wasn't until four months later that Joe understood he was in serious trouble. I brought a copy of the court records to our interview.

Ben Calhoun

Those are the actual charges against you.

Joe Lipari

A PL240-60 and a PL490-20. The one is make terroristic threats, and the second one is false report of a public building and place. Just to clarify, because it is a little bit confusing, Joe is charged with two felonies, including making a terrorist threat. Joe says, even today he's still not sure how something he posted on Facebook got him arrested. A popular theory with Joe's friends and family is that Facebook rummages through people's pages, flags stuff, and tips off law enforcement. Well, I called Facebook. A spokesperson said flat out, quote, "Facebook did not bring this to the attention of law enforcement. Facebook's policy is that they only turn over user content when law enforcement approaches them, and even then, only in extreme situations, like when a child is abducted." Looking at the court records, the actual answer about how the police got tipped off seems to be much more mundane, and frankly kind of unflattering for Joe. The police report originated in Hawthorne, New Jersey, one town over from where Joe grew up. Which means, it was probably someone Joe knew who did this-- someone who just dislikes him enough to report him for no reason, or someone who actually thought he might do it. He had his first court date for all of this in January-- on the 15th, a Friday.

Joe Lipari

When the DA gets up-- or the assistant DA, whatever you call them-- gets up and reads, in front of the judge, reads the charges and then reads the quote aloud in the court room-- and you could just feel everyone in the court room sink. Like you could hear a pin drop. In retrospect, it sounds bad. And the judge even looked at me with a weird look. And I start giggling. When it gets to the AR-10, I giggle. The ADA was like, the people understand that Mr. Lipari is a comedian and what he said is for the benefit of his friend. And so, right there,

I'm like, so why are we even here if you understand it? If you understand I'm just a schmuck that doesn't know when to keep his mouth shut, why are we here?

Ben Calhoun

Since then, Joe's been to court more than half a dozen times over this. And from the sound of it, he hasn't been making things any easier for himself. By his own account, he's given one or two speeches about the Constitution and about how the terrorists have won. Not exactly one to dress for court, Joe recently got scolded for wearing Hawaiian shorts in the courtroom. Joe pointed to the guy next to him and said, that guy's wearing sweatpants. This brings us to what might actually be the most remarkable thing about Joe's whole story, which is this. Most of us learn at some point in our lives that we shouldn't always say whatever impulsive thing we feel like saying. And if we didn't learn that lesson, by getting in trouble in school or making someone cry, the day the cops showed up at our door with machine guns, or the day we had to stand up in court and face felony terrorism charges over a broken cell phone-- those things would be a red light, where we would stop and reevaluate. But has Joe reevaluated, considered whether his life would be easier if he changed?

Joe Lipari

No. I don't think so. I haven't yet. No. Yeah, I don't think I've ever gotten to a point where I'm like, oh man, I'm going to change who I am. No, absolutely not. I can't. I don't know how. Even if I wanted to shut my mouth more often, I don't think I have the facilities to do so.

Ben Calhoun

Why not?

Joe Lipari

I don't know. I can't. I don't want to. I don't want to-- because some of the people who love me, love me for that. The people who hate me, hate me for that. So why am I going to worry about the people who hate me and not the people who love me?

Ben Calhoun

In the last few months, the District Attorney's office offered Joe a number of plea deals. Some of them were pretty good. Most recently, a misdemeanor with some community service. Joe rejected all of them. He wanted a jury trial. He was sure no jury would convict him. Finally, Joe went back to court again. And it seems he kind of won. He's got what's called an adjournment and contemplation of dismissal, which essentially means his case is on ice for the next six months. And then, the prosecutors will drop the charges against him. There is, of course, one hitch to all that, one thing that could ruin this and put Joe right back on the hook. During the next six months, Joe's got to stay out of trouble.

[MUSIC - "RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT" BY THE SILVER JEWS]

Ira Glass

Ben Calhoun is one of the producers of our show. Coming up, another guy who's got no problem standing up to the police though in his case it's because he is the police. That's in a minute. From Chicago Public Radio and Public Radio International when our program continues.

Act Two. Is That a Tape Recorder in Your Pocket, or Are You Just Unhappy to See Me?

Ira Glass

It's This American Life. I'm Ira Glass. Our show today-- Right to Remain Silent. We have two stories of people who very much do not choose to remain silent. We've arrived at act two of our show. Act Two. Is That a Tape Recorder in Your Pocket, or Are You Just Unhappy to See Me? Adrian Schoolcraft is a New York City policeman who decided to secretly record himself and his fellow officers on the job-- all day, every workday, he says for 17 months. Including lots of days when he was ordered to do all kinds of things cops are not supposed to do. It's led to a small scandal, Several people removed from their jobs, and four investigations of the New York Police Department. Though Adrian insists he didn't get into this looking for trouble.

Graham Rayman

His father is a police officer, and, I would say, he went along with the program for a few years.

Ira Glass

This is the reporter who broke the story in *The Village Voice* about Adrian and what he recorded those 17 months, a reporter named Graham Rayman. When I asked Graham what Adrian, the person at the center of this scandal, is like, the first thing out of his mouth is--

Graham Rayman

I would describe him as an extremely earnest person, almost-- in this cynical age-- almost to the point of almost too earnest. He actually believed that he could get the police commissioner to change certain things about how the police department was being run.

Ira Glass

Adrian Schoolcraft was working in Brooklyn-- precinct 81, in Bedford-Stuyvesant, a rough neighborhood, mostly black, that was slowly gentrifying. The precinct is just seven blocks wide and 20 blocks long, roughly, and had 13 murders last year, which is a third of what it used to be. Adrian's kind of an electronics buff, and he bought himself one of those tiny digital recorders, tucked it in his breast pocket, and started recording-- as he walked his beat, when he talked to other cops--

Police Sergeant

All right, attention. Roll call.

Ira Glass

--morning roll calls.

Police Sergeant

Enison.

Enison

Here.

Police Sergeant

Lewis.

Adrian Schoolcraft

The only reason the thought entered my head was because-- to protect myself.

Ira Glass

This is Adrian.

Adrian Schoolcraft

Like any other officer would carry a recorder-- was to protect themselves from any false accusations. Usually from civilians who are upset.

Ira Glass

How big was the recorder?

Adrian Schoolcraft

Oh, about the size of a pack of gum.

Ira Glass

The atmosphere at the 81st precinct was set by its commander, Stephen Mauriello. When Mauriello showed up, Adrian Schoolcraft says, things changed. Offices were told to write more tickets, do more stop-and-frisks, arrest more people for low level offenses that they might otherwise let go-- get their numbers up.

Adrian Schoolcraft

The pressure definitely increased when he arrived and took over as the commanding officer. The analogy I would use is like having a boot to the back of your heel. It is do this or else. The rent's due.

Ira Glass

The rent's due?

Adrian Schoolcraft

The rent is due. Pay the rent. Did you pay the rent last month?

Ira Glass

Pay the rent means did you get your numbers?

Adrian Schoolcraft

Correct.

Ira Glass

Now, it's perfectly legal for police to be told-- like anybody in any job-- here's the amount of work that we expect you to do, number of tickets and arrests that are normal for somebody in your job in this neighborhood. But what's not allowed is to penalize police officers who do not make those targets. We don't want police officers under such pressure to deliver numbers that they make stops and arrests and write summons with no valid reason, just to get their goals. Again, reporter Graham Rayman.

Graham Rayman

In other words, as a police supervisor I can't tell you, you better give me 20 tickets a month or else I'm going to transfer you to the graveyard shift. There can't be a direct relationship between the two.

Ira Glass

That's just against the rules.

Graham Rayman

It's against the law.

Ira Glass

Oh, it's against the law?

Graham Rayman

Yeah, there's a state law against that kind of thing. But what was happening in the precinct, and what the tapes show repeatedly, is that they were tying it to disciplinary action. They were threatening the cops. If you don't hit your numbers, you'll get transferred, you'll lose your assignment, we'll change your partner, you'll go on a foot post, you can be given a worse assignment.

Ira Glass

On November 1, 2008, one sergeant declares at a roll call, quote "they are looking at these numbers and people are going to be moved. They can make your job real uncomfortable, and we all know what that means." On December 8, 2008, the sergeant tells the officers that if they don't get their activity up, quote, "there's some people here that may not be here come next month."

Police Sergeant

There's some people here that may not be here come next month.

Ira Glass

Because officially the NYPD doesn't allow numeric quotas to be tied to job performance, you hear the supervisors in the recording sometimes get into real verbal contortions to get the point across. Like in this excerpt from a roll call the first month that Schoolcraft was recording, June 2008.

Police Sergeant

The XO was in the other day. I don't know who was here. He actually laid down a number.

Ira Glass

I'm just going to repeat this because it's hard to hear. "The XO was in the other day," that's a commanding officer, right?

Adrian Schoolcraft

The Executive Officer.

Ira Glass

Or, the Executive Officer. --"was in the other day. He laid down a number."

Police Sergeant

All right. So, I'm not going to quote him on that, because I don't want to be quoted stating numbers.

Ira Glass

I'm not going to quote him on that, because I don't want to be quoted stating members.

Police Sergeant

All right. He wants at least three seat belts, one cell phone, and 11 others.

Ira Glass

"He wants three seat belts, one cell phone, and 11 others." What does that mean?

Adrian Schoolcraft

He wants three seat-belt summonses, tickets for people not wearing their seat-belt, one cell phone, someone driving in their car talking on the cell phone, and eleven others, there are dozens of other categories of summonses that you can give people.

Police Sergeant

I don't know what the number is, but that's what he wants.

Ira Glass

I don't know what the number is, but that's what he wants. That's a really-- what does that mean?

Adrian Schoolcraft

He's playing the same game. He knows he's not supposed to state a number, but he wants to get his point across. So it's kind of like, if you remember *All the President's Men*, it's a non-denial denial.

Ira Glass

Adrian Schoolcraft says he isn't exactly sure when, but at some point he had decided that it was important to document the orders that he was given that he thought were out of line. He recorded roll calls where officers were constantly being told to do more stop-and-frisks, even though it's illegal to stop a random person on the street and frisk them without reasonable suspicion. In December 2008, a sergeant tells officers to stop-and-frisk quote, "anybody walking around, no matter what the explanation is." He recorded Stephen Mauriello, the commander the 81st precinct-- and the person Adrian Schoolcraft says really brought the hammer down for higher numbers-- ordering the officers to arrest everyone they see. This happens in a couple of recordings, like this one from Halloween 2008.

Stephen Mauriello

Any roving bands-- you hear me-- roving bands more than two or three people--

Ira Glass

He's saying "any roving bands of more than two or three people"-- he's talking about just people going around on Halloween night--

Stephen Mauriello

I want them stopped--

Ira Glass

I want them stopped--

Stephen Mauriello

--cuffed--

Ira Glass

--cuffed--

Stephen Mauriello

--throw them in here, run some warrants.

Ira Glass

--throw them in here, run some warrants.

Stephen Mauriello

You're on a foot post? [BLEEP] it. Take the first guy you've got and lock them all up. Boom.

Ira Glass

You're on a foot post? F it. Take the first guy you've got, lock them all up. Boom.

Stephen Mauriello

We're going to go back out and process them later on, I've got no problems--

Ira Glass

--go back out and then we'll come back in and process them later on."

Adrian Schoolcraft

Yes. Yeah, what he's saying is, arrest people simply for the purpose of clearing the streets.

Ira Glass

Again, Graham Rayman. He says the problem with that is--

Graham Rayman

There has to be a violation of the law to make an arrest. He's essentially making the arrest before the crime takes place.

John Eterno

This is an example of something that I would say-- they're going out in the street and just grabbing people-- that's unlawful imprisonment. It's an illegal arrest.

Ira Glass

That's John Eterno, a former New York City cop, who went up the ranks from officer to sergeant, to lieutenant, to captain. He now chairs the Department of Criminal Justice at Molloy College and researches and writes about police practices with Professor Eli Silverman. And he says that some of the things that Adrian Schoolcraft documented on his recordings were no surprise to anybody-- like sergeants hounding officers to get their numbers up. That's been happening in every precinct for a long time, he says. But for commanders to tell cops, just lock people up and figure it out later-- Eterno says the word for that is kidnapping.

John Eterno

That's exactly what it is. They're just pulling people off the street. It's an unlawful imprisonment and they're being kidnapped. If they don't have probable cause, you cannot grab people off the street. It is kidnapping. At this point, from what I'm hearing on this tape, it seems to me that this is probably illegal behavior that's taking place on the part of the police department.

Andre Wade

We were arrested, they take us to the 81st precinct, put us in lock up for maybe an hour or two. And they processed us and checked for warrants. And once they see no warrants, they let us go, but we were still issued a citation.

Ira Glass

Andre Wade has lived in the neighborhood for over twenty years. He's a commercial driver. One day, he and two friends were picking up his brother to go to work together. They were standing on the sidewalk, and a

police officer came over, and said they were trespassing. When his brother came down and confirmed, no, no they were there to pick them up, Andre says the officer wouldn't listen.

Andre Wade

He was just saying stuff like, you know you're not supposed to be standing here. He started getting upset when we were trying to talk him out of giving us the citations. And it's like he just got out of control. He got real erratic and got on the radio. And the next thing you know, we turn around and there's eight, nine police cars. It was to the point to where you would think that somebody was getting arrested for murder, or something like that. And they were just jumping out of their vehicles, and me and my buddies already knew that we were in for a ride.

Ira Glass

The citation that the police gave Wade lists his name, the day that he's supposed to appear in court, but in the spot where it's supposed to specify his crime--

Andre Wade

Yes, in that field of the ticket there was nothing-- no violation. The violation was blank.

Ira Glass

One of the producers of our radio show lives in the 81st precinct. And she says that it's one of those neighborhoods where everybody has stories of ridiculous tickets. One of her neighbors was bringing his aunt home from the hospital, and he double parked. Two officers told him to move his car, and when he didn't, he was handcuffed, forced to lie down in the street, and tasered twice-- all in front of a crowd of people, including her, who live on the block and heard him calling for help. One common citation is for having an open container of alcohol. One neighbor says he was walking home from church with his six year old daughter, drinking a small carton of Tropicana orange juice, and he got a ticket for that. Others got tickets for water and Gatorade that was being given away at the park. George Walker has lived on the same block for over 40 years and says older guys like him get a lot of tickets. He thinks maybe they're targeted because they don't give the cops any fuss. He says he's gotten a dozen tickets this past year, nearly all for open container, even though he says he wasn't drinking alcohol.

George Walker

Every last ticket was dismissed. Every one was not a valid ticket. Because if you see someone drinking alcohol, and you give them a ticket for open container, you have to name what they were drinking. But if they can't name it, they just say cup with alcohol in it. But that's not the name of the alcohol, so it gets dismissed-- because it wasn't alcohol in the first place. But they feel like they can do anything the want to us.

Ira Glass

So in this police station, where everybody's obsessed with how many tickets they're writing-- where cops are told to pull people off corners and throw them in jail and figure out later what to charge them with-- comes Adrian Schoolcraft, who had no interest in making his numbers.

Adrian Schoolcraft

No, I never tried to make anything happen. I went out there, and you walk you beat. And whatever happened, happened.

Ira Glass

When you would talk to other officers in the precinct, did you have friends who felt the same way?

Adrian Schoolcraft

Yes.

Ira Glass

And would they not get the numbers, or would they get the numbers?

Adrian Schoolcraft

They would get the numbers. It's easier. Especially if you have a wife, kids. Then they're devoted to their pension and retiring.

Ira Glass

Do you not have a wife and kids?

Adrian Schoolcraft

No.

Ira Glass

And so you wouldn't go up to people just to give them a ticket?

Adrian Schoolcraft

No.

Ira Glass

Because?

Adrian Schoolcraft

It just wasn't right. I found I was getting along with a lot of the local business owners, and I started interacting with the residents, and they would tell me who the problems were. Now, if you start messing with the residents, and you start going into the barber shops and writing summonses that I don't feel police officers have any business writing-- they didn't sweep the floor of hair-- these are the same people that could help you perform your job as a patrolman or a police officer. That was my philosophy, and it did work.

Ira Glass

And so did you get a lot of heat for doing this?

Adrian Schoolcraft

He [UNINTELLIGIBLE] pressure from supervisors.

Ira Glass

What would they do?

Adrian Schoolcraft

Well I think they considered the foot post punishment, but I always enjoyed the foot post. But there's also hospitalized prisoners, prisoner transports.

Ira Glass

So they would assign you to these lousy posts?

Adrian Schoolcraft

Yeah. To get my mind right, they would try those, but I accepted those as normal duties as a police officer.

Ira Glass

But we still haven't gotten to the most disturbing thing documented by Adrian Schoolcraft and his recordings. Schoolcraft shows, over and over, that sometimes when real crimes would happen, serious crimes, the 81st precinct would reclassify them as lesser crimes-- or simply not put them in the system at all-- to make it look like the precinct was doing a better job driving down crime rates than it really was. Again reporter Graham Rayman.

Graham Rayman

There's a remarkable conversation that Schoolcraft has with another officer. And the other officer is just telling him three anecdotes of how the precinct commanding supervisor basically dumped three criminal complaints that should've been recorded.

Ira Glass

Yeah, what are the stories that he tells?

Graham Rayman

One is-- a young woman reports her cell phone was robbed, and the precinct commander basically says--

Police Officer

--what do you want me to do? What do you want to do with this?

Graham Rayman

What do you want us to do with this? How are we going to solve this? Are you going to get your phone back? You're not going to get your phone back.

Police Officer

I mean, he's like, "well, what if we can't get it back?" He's like, "are you going to press charges?"

Graham Rayman

He basically talks her out of filing a complaint, and that should be a robbery that should go in their numbers. And one of the other ones is-- the precinct commander responds to a report of a stolen vehicle. And his first question is, he asks the victim have you done jail time?

Police Officer

He's like, "you ever been arrested before?" He's like, "yeah." And he's like, "what for?"

Graham Rayman

--which is not really a proper question to ask of a crime victim. But he asks it, and the guy says yes. Yeah, I did eight years in prison when I was younger. And the precinct commander says maybe karma stole your car.

Police Officer

"So you think maybe Karma woke up this morning and took your car?"

Adrian Schoolcraft

Karma as in the spiritual--

Police Officer

He was like, "no, I don't think Karma takes cars." He's like, "I think somebody took my car."

Adrian Schoolcraft

So he didn't take his report because he's a felon?

Police Officer

Yeah. Basically.

Ira Glass

In the end, this cop tells Adrian, their supervisor, Stephen Mauriello, told him to file the case as an unauthorized driver.

Graham Rayman

--meaning that the guy loaned his car to somebody else who now has it.

Ira Glass

Then when the officer tried to file it that way, because he didn't have a name for the unauthorized driver, he couldn't file it at all. So the robbery went unreported. Rules go into effect in the 81st precinct that make it harder to report serious crimes. Officers are told that if there's a robbery, one of their supervisors has to come out to the scene themselves. And robbery victims are told that if they don't come into the police station, no crime report will be filed at all. After Graham Rayman started publishing these stories about Adrian Schoolcraft, retired cops and some on-duty cops started contacting him with their own anecdotes about crimes being downgraded from serious to much less serious-- the most shocking of these from a high ranking detective name Harold Hernandez.

Graham Rayman

He's a very distinguished detective. He was working in the 33rd precinct in Washington Heights. And one morning he comes into work and there's a guy who's accused of first degree rape sitting in his interview room. So he sits down and he looks at the guy. And he has a little twinge, and he says, have you ever done this before? And the guy said, yeah. And Hernandez says, how many times? And he says, oh, I don't know, seven or eight. And Hernandez says, where? And he goes, in this neighborhood. And Hernandez is now dumbstruck because there's been no report of a serial rapist-- sexual predator-- working the neighborhood.

Ira Glass

Like, no crimes have shown up. People haven't shown up saying they've been raped or assaulted.

Graham Rayman

He hasn't been notified. And he would be notified as a senior detective in the unit. It would be a very big deal. And so he says, can you give me the dates and locations? And the guy says, well, I can try, but you're going to have to take me around and I'll show. I'll show you. So he and a fellow detective get in the car and they drive around. And they look, and the suspect-- whose name is Darryl Thomas-- points out the locations. And then Hernandez takes his notebook and he writes down the locations. And then he goes back and he looks through stacks of crime complaints. And he finds them. And he realizes that they've been classified-- they've been downgraded. They've been classified either as criminal trespassing or criminal possession of a weapon-- both relatively minor crimes, given that the actual conduct in the narrative that the victims are describing is either first degree burglary, robbery, or sexual abuse, sexual assault. And he confronts his bosses about it. He confronts the precinct commander. And he confronts his detective squad commander. And everyone just shrugs. Meanwhile everyone's terrified that it's going to come out-- that these women are going to go to the press, and it's going to be a huge embarrassment, a huge scandal for the department. And if it had come out, it would have been a huge scandal for the department. But the department was able to keep it quiet. The District Attorney's office prosecuted Thomas and he went away for 50 years. But here's the interesting part-- they never publicized the case. There was never a press release issued about it. There was never a news article written about the case.

Ira Glass

Normally, Graham says, that a case like this-- serial rapist-- they'd try to get some press. But the misclassifications of the crimes would have made the NYPD look bad. No one was ever disciplined for what happened, for downgrading. The precinct commander was promoted twice by Commissioner Kelly.

Ira Glass

The guy who was in charge of that precinct where all this stuff happened?

Graham Rayman

Where this stuff happened. He's been promoted twice. It just went on, business as usual. Hernandez-- here's a guy who probably would've stayed in the department for 35 years, 30, 35-- as long as he could. But he was so upset about this incident and about other instances of downgrading and of manipulation of the crime stats that he retired.

Ira Glass

And so the NYPD has denied that crimes were downgraded like this.

Graham Rayman

Yeah. Well, they said that it only happens in a very tiny percentage of cases. And they say that the crimes stats are audited very carefully, And if it was a wider problem it would be spotted.

Ira Glass

The New York Police Department declined our request to come onto the radio or to have the officers who supervised Adrian Schoolcraft, and who are heard on his recordings, to be interviewed about their side of all this. But the pressure on police commanders to get better numbers really goes back to 1994, when New York started tracking crimes with a system called CompStat. CompStat, for the first time, gave commanders timely, accurate data once a week on what crimes are happening, so they could send more cops to deal with it. Chances are you've heard of all this. It became one of the best known successes in modern policing. Serious crime has dropped an astonishing 77% in New York City since CompStat began in 1994. Other cities very quickly started imitating it-- DC, Philly, LA. Baltimore's version of CompStat ended up in a recurring plot line on the TV show *The Wire*, where street cops are told by the bosses to do anything to pump up their numbers. And the problem with CompStat, says Professor Eli Silverman, who studies the way police forces use numbers, is that the early success of CompStat created the expectation that numbers must get better every single year, no matter what.

Eli Silverman

In the beginning it was like an orange. You could squeeze juice from an orange in the beginning much more readily than you can as you extract juice from that orange. And now, it gets harder and harder to drive crime down, because you're compared to not how you were in '94, but how you were last year the same week. And when something's pushed to the excess that it is now, and numbers dominate the system, that's when you have negative consequences.

Ira Glass

As apparently the one person in the 81st precinct who was not obsessed by the numbers, Adrian Schoolcraft, by January 2009, had so displeased his bosses that they gave him a failing job evaluation that covered the entire year of 2008-- which meant one thing, Schoolcraft says.

Adrian Schoolcraft

They're starting a paper trail, and they'll just keep documenting. They're starting to move you out.

Ira Glass

He hired a lawyer and appealed the evaluation, but started feeling more pressure than ever to go out and do what his bosses wanted. He began to get stomach pains and tightness in his chest. He had trouble sleeping. Again, reporter Graham Rayman.

Graham Rayman

I think within the precinct, he was probably seen as a little bit eccentric. And also, he wasn't going with the program. And anyone who doesn't go with the program is automatically marked.

Ira Glass

Schoolcraft began to feel that he was being retaliated against. He got written up for taking a bathroom break without putting it in his log. Another officer was written up for talking to him. When he went to the duty captain, he was told yes, he was being monitored.

Duty Captain

Because of your past activity. When people at the same level as you and the same post as you, are doing a lot more than what you do when you're out there, we don't know if you're even out there. That's the problem.

Ira Glass

If there's a bunch of kids on a stoop and you're walking past, the duty captain asks him, and then named some addresses where that might happen, you just go on your merry way, because you don't see anything going on? Schoolcraft tells him he wouldn't just create fake charges. That's a common practice here, he says. Captain asks him what he means, and says in 19 years, he's never seen anybody create charges. Then he asks Schoolcraft the question again.

Duty Captain

Those kids on the step. Are you going to keep walking?

Adrian Schoolcraft

No.

Duty Captain

Are you going to ask them if they live there?

Adrian Schoolcraft

You usually won't get a response, but--

Duty Captain

Right. [BLEEP] you, Schoolcraft. Right?

Adrian Schoolcraft

That's how it usually happens.

Duty Captain

Yeah. Are you going to create something there? Because I could tell you that if that [BLEEP] told me to [BLEEP] myself. Yeah, so you go in the handcuffs for telling me that? Yeah. That's it. If you let that go because there's no violation, because he didn't break the law, then I feel bad for you. Because then you have a tough job. And then maybe you should find something else to do, you know? So if you call that creating something? You call that creating something? Or do you call that a matter of keeping the respect, because they'll step all over you when they see you out there. They'll do whatever they want in front of you when you're out there.

Ira Glass

Schoolcraft says that around this time, the recordings became about trying to keep his job. Somebody tells him that one of his bosses wants to force him out on psychiatric grounds.

Ira Glass

During this whole time that you were recording, who did you tell?

Adrian Schoolcraft

My father knew.

Ira Glass

Friends?

Adrian Schoolcraft

No.

Ira Glass

Fellow officers?

Adrian Schoolcraft

No.

Ira Glass

Were you tempted to tell anybody ever?

Adrian Schoolcraft

No.

Ira Glass

What'd your dad say?

Adrian Schoolcraft

He would ask me if I heard anything that day.

Ira Glass

And when you were getting these orders to get your numbers up and you wouldn't do it, what did your dad say about that?

Adrian Schoolcraft

He would just reiterate to me how the quota system-- wherever you are, whatever city you're in-- it's unethical and it's illegal.

Ira Glass

So he was on your side.

Adrian Schoolcraft

Yes.

Ira Glass

Finally in April, Schoolcraft takes off a week for stomach and chest pains and is sent to a police department doctor. The doctor finds nothing wrong with him physically.

Adrian Schoolcraft

And he asked me if I was experiencing stress or anything. I said, well, yes. Matter of fact, this is what's going on. And he said, are you sure you want to tell me this?

Ira Glass

Schoolcraft says he laid it all out for the doctor-- his bad performance evaluation, the numbers he was asked to hit, and also more personal disputes with his bosses about whether his evaluation was falsified, was the precinct doing training it claimed it was doing. And the police department doctor referred Schoolcraft to see a police department psychologist for an evaluation. And when Schoolcraft tells the psychologist the same things that he told the doctor, she asked him to turn in his gun and shield.

Adrian Schoolcraft

Well, she made it sound like it was normal. She said, it's not unusual for us to take an officer's gun and shield if he or she is having chest pains. Schoolcraft moves to a job answering phones at the precinct, where he continues to gather evidence. And in October, he finally talks to the people in the police department who investigate unethical practices-- the Internal Affairs Bureau, IAB-- and it doesn't go well. Schoolcraft says that not only did they seem very skeptical, he claims that Internal Affairs left phone messages for him at the precinct. He says this alerted his bosses to the fact that he was talking to Internal Affairs. Internal Affairs does start an investigation, though. And soon, Schoolcraft gets a phone call from the division of the police department whose main purpose is to make sure that crime reporting and statistics using CompStat are accurate. It's called the Quality Assurance Division. And at last, Schoolcraft says, somebody seems to take his accusations seriously. Investigators hear him out, ask lots of questions, and promise to look into it.

Qad Representative

I appreciate you coming in, and bringing [INAUDIBLE] to our attention.

Ira Glass

He doesn't tell them that he has recordings. In fact, as you can hear, he secretly records this three hour meeting with them. But he does give them documentation-- real evidence to back up his charges. And what happens next to Adrian Schoolcraft is very, very strange. Just a few weeks after his meetings with Internal Affairs and QAD, he shows up to work. It's the end of October.

Adrian Schoolcraft

As soon as I sit down, a lieutenant approaches me and asks for my activity log. Well, this activity log is where I keep a lot of my notes regarding what people are saying and the times they're saying it.

Ira Glass

And all the things, basically, you're trying to report that you think are going wrong in the precinct.

Adrian Schoolcraft

Correct. And it wasn't until I got it back that I realized the cat was out of the bag. He had bent the corners on some of the pages, and I saw what piqued his interest. And I became very worried, how he was looming around me-- I felt threatened by it. And again, all these officers are armed. But I left with permission.

Ira Glass

Because you thought, what was going to happen?

Adrian Schoolcraft

Well, I wasn't sure. I just felt his behavior worried me. And--

Ira Glass

But you thought he might provoke you into something, and then he would shoot you, or something?

Adrian Schoolcraft

That was one of the fears. I'm not just an officer inside. Now I'm an officer that has this psych issue. No one's supposed to know, but everyone knows that when you have your gun and shield taken, you've been psyched. And you have that brand on you. So what's going to happen? Are they going to say I lunged at him? Or are they-- any kind of scenario could play out. And I just didn't feel comfortable, so I left.

Ira Glass

How he left is in dispute. Schoolcraft says that he told a sergeant that he was feeling sick and went home an hour early. The police say the sergeant never said yes to this request. In any case, Schoolcraft went home and went to bed.

Adrian Schoolcraft

A few hours later, I received a phone call from my father, and he told me he received a phone call from my XO. He says, look outside your window. And I looked out my window and there were multiple police vehicles, and there seemed to be quite a crowd.

Police Officer

[KNOCKING] [INAUDIBLE]

Ira Glass

Adrian has no idea what they want, but he knows the situation is bad, so he starts recording.

Adrian Schoolcraft

31 October, 2009. [KNOCKING]

Ira Glass

The officers open Adrian's door with a key they get from his landlord.

Police Officer

Adrian! Police department, buddy. Let me see your hands.

Adrian Schoolcraft

They've just entered my home. And they were in their helmets, and gear, and tasers. They had the special weapon-- basically SWAT.

Police Officer

You all right?

Adrian Schoolcraft

Yeah, I think so.

Police Officer

Everybody's worried about you. They haven't heard from you.

Adrian Schoolcraft

Who's worried about me?

Michael Marino

Adrian, didn't you hear us knocking on this door for a couple of hours?

Adrian Schoolcraft

No. Why would I expect anyone to knock on my door?

Michael Marino

I don't know, Adrian. But if you hear somebody knocking, normally you get up and answer it. They were kicking on that door loud and yelling.

Adrian Schoolcraft

I wasn't feeling well.

Michael Marino

All right. Sit down. Sit down.

Ira Glass

That voice you just heard in Adrian's bedroom is a man of much higher rank than anybody in any of the recordings to this point. He's the number two commander for the NYPD for all of Brooklyn North, Michael Marino. Stephen Mauriello, the head of the 81st precinct, the commander that Adrian contends had been putting pressure on all the officers to deliver better numbers, is also there in the bedroom. He talks next.

Stephen Mauriello

You've got everybody worried. They're worried about your safety. All right?

Adrian Schoolcraft

Worried about what?

Stephen Mauriello

What do you mean, worried about what? They tried calling you. You got-- everybody's been calling you. You just walked out of the precinct, you know? That's what we're worried about. Your safety, your well-being.

Adrian Schoolcraft

All right. I'm fine.

Ira Glass

Why does he keep saying that he's worried about your safety?

Adrian Schoolcraft

That's his excuse to come into my home.

Stephen Mauriello

Get your stuff on. We're going back to the precinct.

Adrian Schoolcraft

I'm not going back to the precinct.

Stephen Mauriello

Adrian, we're going to go back to the precinct.

Adrian Schoolcraft

For?

Stephen Mauriello

Because we're going to do it the right way. You can't just walk out of command--

Adrian Schoolcraft

What's going to be done if I go to the 8-1?

Stephen Mauriello

What's going to be done. We're going to investigate why you left.

Adrian Schoolcraft

I'm telling you why I left. I was feeling sick.

Stephen Mauriello

Adrian, that's not the reason why you leave. All right, you know that.

Ira Glass

Adrian knows the rules and he asks if he's under arrest. He's not under arrest. But the number two commander for Brooklyn North, Michael Marino, tells him he's giving him an order.

Michael Marino

Listen to me. I'm a chief in the New York City Police Department, and you're a police officer. So this is what's going to happen, my friend. You've disobeyed an order, and the way you're acting is not right, at the very least.

Adrian Schoolcraft

Chief, if you--

Michael Marino

Stop right there.

Adrian Schoolcraft

--open up your house--

Michael Marino

Stop. Stop right there, son.

Adrian Schoolcraft

--how would you behave?

Michael Marino

Son, I'm doing the talking right now, not you.

Adrian Schoolcraft

In my apartment.

Michael Marino

In your apartment. You are going--

Adrian Schoolcraft

Is this Russia?

Michael Marino

You are going to be suspended. All right? That's what's going to happen. You're suspended son.

Adrian Schoolcraft

That's when I found out what they-- that's what they were so desperate to accomplish.

Ira Glass

How many people are in your bedroom at this point?

Adrian Schoolcraft

In the bedroom, at all times, there's at least four. And then there's a living room-- at least a dozen.

Ira Glass

If this seems like an extreme response to you, reporter Graham Rayman confirms, it is.

Graham Rayman

Yeah, it's very extreme for going home from work early-- an hour early.

Ira Glass

An officer asks Adrian if he wants medical aid-- an EMT to come check him out. Adrian's blood pressure turns out to be sky high. They offer to take him to a hospital, but not his local hospital-- to one that he's never heard of. And he doesn't get what they're up to, and he refuses medical attention. Under the law, they should leave him alone. But for some reason, they will not take no for an answer.

Stephen Mauriello

Adrian, lie down in the bus and we'll go.

Adrian Schoolcraft

I can lie down in my own bed. I haven't done anything wrong.

Stephen Mauriello

Yeah, you have.

Adrian Schoolcraft

OK, file it. Write it up.

Stephen Mauriello

Now, it's a matter of your health.

Michael Marino

Adrian, listen to me. All right, son?

Ira Glass

Again, this is Deputy Chief Marino, from Brooklyn North.

Michael Marino

Right now, EMS is saying that you're acting irrational-- this is them, not us-- and that if you go to the hospital, listen to me--

Adrian Schoolcraft

Yeah, and you're whispering in their ear--

Michael Marino

Adrian, they are not--

Adrian Schoolcraft

Chief, do what you've got to do.

Michael Marino

--listen to me. Now you have a choice. You get up like a man and put your shoes on and walk into that bus--

Adrian Schoolcraft

Like a man.

Michael Marino

--like a man. Or son, they're going to treat you as an EDP and that means handcuffs. And I do not want to see that happen to a cop.

Ira Glass

EDP is?

Adrian Schoolcraft

Emotionally Disturbed Person.

Michael Marino

Son, you've caused this.

Adrian Schoolcraft

I didn't cause anything.

Michael Marino

You have caused this. Now you have a choice. They're saying you have to go to the hospital. That's EMS. These are trained medical professionals. And if you don't go, then you're not acting rationally. And they say now they're afraid you're emotionally disturbed.

Adrian Schoolcraft

It was all very surreal. At that point right there, he's very agitated. His face is red, and I knew then that anything could happen. I had no witnesses. No one was living with me.

Michael Marino

So you have a choice. What is it going to be?

Adrian Schoolcraft

I'm laying right here until I feel better.

Michael Marino

OK, son. He's EDP. He's EDP.

Police Officer

Put your hands behind your back.

Adrian Schoolcraft

Why am I putting my hands behind my back?

Michael Marino

Because you have to go to the hospital. All right, just take him. I can't [BLEEP] understand him anymore.

Police Officer

Adrian, come here. Put your hands behind your back.

Adrian Schoolcraft

[GRUNTS]

Police Officer

Get your hands behind your back.

Adrian Schoolcraft

[GRUNTS]

Police Officer

Get one hand. Go ahead. Get one hand.

Adrian Schoolcraft

They pulled me off the bed. They slammed me to the floor. The way they were stomping on my back, they were pressing on my chest in a way that it was affecting my circulation.

Michael Marino

Adrian stop it.

Adrian Schoolcraft

My chest. Oh, my chest.

Ira Glass

During the struggle, as they cuff Adrian, the little recorder falls out of his pocket. Deputy Chief Marino spots it.

Michael Marino

Absolutely amazing, Adrian. You put your fellow police officers through this. Absolutely amazing. Yeah, it's a recorder. Recording devices, and everything else-- so he's playing a game here. Cute.

Ira Glass

So if he found that recorder, how are we hearing this tape?

Adrian Schoolcraft

No, he found the recorder that was in my pocket. There was another recorder. The one that was running was just a recorder on the shelf.

Ira Glass

In plain sight?

Adrian Schoolcraft

I had some books around it.

Ira Glass

Now that Deputy Chief Marino has labeled Schoolcraft EDP, the police take Schoolcraft and commit him to a psychiatric ward, saying he was a danger to himself. Schoolcraft, who had spent months documenting his bosses telling cops to lock people up on contrived pretenses, now found himself locked up on contrived pretenses.

Adrian Schoolcraft

They told the hospital staff that I left work early, I yelled at my supervisor-- and I swore at my supervisors, cursed at them-- that I ran from them, and I barricaded myself in my home.

Ira Glass

But the tapes showed that isn't true.

Adrian Schoolcraft

Correct, no. None of that happened.

Ira Glass

Schoolcraft's father, the last person Schoolcraft talked to, is unable to find him for days. The last he heard, his son was in an apartment surrounded by police, the next, he just vanished. His father says he called Internal Affairs, the FBI, the press. Finally he located him by calling around the hospitals all over Queens.

Adrian Schoolcraft

That's the only way I got out, because he confronted the hospital administration and said, here's my son's health care proxy, I'm his father. Why have you imprisoned my son here? And they had no answer, and they had to release me.

Ira Glass

Why do you think they went so far with you?

Adrian Schoolcraft

It seemed like an act of desperation. Panic.

Graham Rayman

You can look at it in a couple of different ways.

Ira Glass

Again, reporter Graham Rayman.

Graham Rayman

One is that they put him in the psych ward because he tried to report corruption and misconduct. They literally tried to destroy his reputation.

Ira Glass

Like, he's literally crazy. That's the message.

Graham Rayman

Yeah, right. That they were trying to portray him as crazy. You could also look at it-- that the chief lost his temper that night. Just got angry and gave an order that turns out to be a totally inappropriate order. I could see that being the case also.

Ira Glass

At the time that he led the raid on Schoolcraft's apartment, Deputy Chief Michael Marino was already under a microscope. It was just a month after he had been put on trial inside the department after a sting named him as one of 27 cops who illegally bought human growth hormone, or steroids. Marino claimed that he used the human growth hormone for a medical condition. And back in 2006, an arbitrator found that Marino was in violation of New York labor laws for a very similar situation to the one that Schoolcraft was documenting. The arbitrator ruled that Marino had set up an illegal quota for police officers of four parking tickets, three moving violations, three quality of life summons, and two stop-and-frisk per month and then penalized the officers when they didn't make the quota.

Adrian Schoolcraft

I didn't figure I would lose my job.

Ira Glass

Adrian Schoolcraft says that in the end, none of this worked out the way he thought it would during all those months of recording.

Adrian Schoolcraft

I figured someone would approach the supervisor and say, listen you got caught. Knock it off. And everything's in house, still. Just knock it off. This is getting out of control. I never saw myself as an adversary.

Ira Glass

Because you assumed that the police commissioner-- the people at the very top of the police force-- that they would be on your side.

Adrian Schoolcraft

Correct.

Ira Glass

But now do you believe that, in fact, they would be on your side?

Adrian Schoolcraft

I don't believe they were, or ever intended to be.

Ira Glass

That's the question, of course. And there's really no way to know how typical the 81st precinct is. Reporter Graham Rayman has heard from retired cops who say the same things happened where they worked. And he's found a policeman who was secretly recording in the Bronx at the same time as Schoolcraft finding the same things. The guys who study the way CompStat is used by the police, John Eterno and Eli Silverman, say manipulating stats to get better numbers seems to happen in a lot of places where CompStat is used.

Eli Silverman

There's evidence of the same kind of distortion-- we've done research, where people have written in our blog-- from other countries, UK, Australia, as well. Commanders attesting to the same phenomenon. This is not unique to New York.

Ira Glass

Having failed to reach any results working inside the department, Schoolcraft finally went to the press. And Graham's five-part series in *The Village Voice* has been, Adrian says, like a meteor hitting the 81st precinct. The police commissioner transferred Commander Stephen Mauriello, and some of the other senior-level supervisors, out of the precinct. Though he only did that after several weeks of pressure from politicians and clergy. There's now one police investigation into Schoolcraft's allegations, there's another investigation of Deputy Chief Marino's order to put Schoolcraft into a psych ward, another into the charge that serious crimes were downgraded to lesser ones, and a fourth that is just about the misclassification of crimes in Detective Hernandez's sexual assault case. Schoolcraft's recordings will be used in two class action lawsuits, one about stop-and-frisks, one about quotas. Schoolcraft himself is suing the department for \$50 million. Two officers have come forward to back up his charges. A website, schoolcraftjustice.com has been set up looking for more. Schoolcraft himself is suspended without pay, living with his dad, 350 miles away, in upstate New York-- where, he says, a dozen times city police have shown up and pounded on his door, yelling, "NYPD, we know you're in there. Open up." [KNOCKING] Of course, he recorded it.

Police Officer

Adrian, we know you're in there. Just open the door please, so we can get back to New York.

Ira Glass

Schoolcraft assumes that he'll never again work as a police officer anywhere.

Ira Glass

Is it weird not to be a policeman anymore?

Adrian Schoolcraft

It feels odd. But I still feel like I am a policeman. I'm going forward with this investigation. I just feel like this is my case. This is the one. And I'll go all the way with it.

Ira Glass

And finally, with the 81st precinct under new supervision, the numbers on serious crime have risen by 10-15%. Are the crimes going up, or that's closer to the true amount of crime that was already there, only now being recorded? [MUSIC - "OFFICER" BY THE PHARCYDE] Well, our program today was produced by me and Sarah Koenig, with Alex Blumberg, Ben Calhoun, Jane Feeldes, Jonathan Menjivar, Lisa Pollak, Robin Semien, and Alissa Shipp and Nancy Updike. Our senior producer is Julie Snyder. Seth Lind is our production manager. Emily Condon's our office manager. Music help from Jessica Hopper. Production help from Shawn Wen. [ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS] This American Life is distributed by Public Radio International. WBEZ management oversight of our program by our boss, Mr. Torey Malatia, who's got no problem with the end of Don't Ask, Don't Tell. Seriously.

Joe Lipari

No, I have a gay cousin. I am the least homophobic person in the world.

Ira Glass

I'm Ira Glass. Back next week with more stories of This American Life.

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