



From Naomi Wolf's arrest in New York to shootings in Tucson and Florida, forces face allegations of abuse of power.

A report from the New York Civil Liberties Union recently looked at police use of Taser stun guns in the state, and revealed that in 60% of incidents where they were used, the incident did not meet the recommended criteria for such a weapon. Some cases involved people already handcuffed and 40% involved "at risk" subjects such as children, the elderly or mentally ill. "This disturbing pattern of misuse and abuse endangers lives," said the NYCLU's executive director, Donna Lieberman.

"There is a widespread, continuing pattern of officers ordering people to stop taking photographs or video in public places, and harassing, detaining and arresting those who fail to comply," said Chris Calabrese, of the American Civil Liberties Union. Campaigners say the spread of camera phones is why so many incidents of brutality are appearing.

In another recorded call, Daragjati complained to a friend: "I could throw somebody a beating, they catch me on camera, and I'm fired." Some activists have taken that to heart. Diop Kamau, a former officer, runs the Florida-based Police Complaint Centre, which investigates allegations of police abuse nationwide. "Police are now facing an onslaught of scrutiny because everyone has a cellphone," he said.

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