

News Roundup

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Lots of interesting developments in the news recently. The Tar Heels won *another* women's soccer national championship, and the United States finally got a favorable draw for the World Cup. Oops, wrong kind of news. Anyway, recent *criminal law* happenings include:

1. *Wired* magazine [reports](#) that one-third of young people engage in "sexting," a behavior that I've previously blogged about [here](#) and [here](#).
2. The *News and Observer* ran an [article](#) this weekend about the restorative justice movement, and a Durham meeting promoting it. The piece describes restorative justice as "a new movement that focuses on healing the harm that results from crime as opposed to simply meting out punishment."
3. The *New York Times* has a [terrific preview](#) of the Supreme Court's upcoming arguments about the scope of the federal "honest services" statute that has been at the heart of several recent high-profile prosecutions. With the high-profile investigations now going on in the United States Attorney's Office in Raleigh, what the Supreme Court does could have a significant local impact.
4. Speaking of the United States Attorney's Office, President Obama recently nominated Charlotte lawyer Thomas Walker to be the United States Attorney for the Eastern District of North Carolina, as reported [here](#). He's a former state and federal prosecutor now in practice with Alston and Bird, LLP.
5. [This blog post](#) about cell phone companies releasing tracking data to law enforcement has been receiving a lot of attention. The title, *8 Million Reasons for Real Surveillance Oversight*, is based on a statement apparently made by a highly-placed Sprint employee that the company filled eight million law enforcement requests for location data last year alone. I suspect that figure, if accurate at all, is based on a very elastic definition of "request." Certainly that's what [Sprint is now saying](#). Regardless, the post contains a lot of provocative material for those interested in law and technology. I should add that the author's not a lawyer and that the technical and statistical aspects of the piece are better than the legal aspects.
6. Speaking of blogs, the ABA just released its annual list of the 100 top legal blogs. No, we're not on it. (Yet!) But lots of interesting blogs are, so check out the list [here](#).
7. Finally, British prosecutors recently dropped charges against a man who strangled his wife, concluding that he was sleepwalking when he killed her. The story is [here](#). In North Carolina, a sleepwalking defendant would argue automatism or unconsciousness, and N.C.P.I. -- Crim. 302.10 would be the relevant pattern jury instruction.