

News Roundup

Author : Jeff Welty

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WRAL just published [this fascinating story](#), about North Carolina prisoners' access to reading materials, the grounds on which access to reading materials can be denied – such as that the materials are sexually explicit, encourage gang activity, or promote violence or “disorder” – and the procedure through which such denials may be appealed. There are a ton of interesting links and perspectives. Well worth a read.

In other news:

New supplement to North Carolina Crimes. The 2013 cumulative supplement to *North Carolina Crimes* is now available for purchase [here](#). The AOC has purchased copies for judges, prosecutors, PDs, magistrates, clerks, and a few others, and should have those copies distributed by the end of this month.

Best Supreme Court justices. Ever. Harvard Law Professor Cass Sunstein just published [this piece](#), ranking the top eight justices ever to serve on the Court. Brennan and Rehnquist both make it so it isn't too skewed one way or the other, ideologically. Any historians out there care to offer up a similar list of top North Carolina Supreme Court justices?

Marijuana reform news. Marijuana reform is an incredibly interesting criminal law story right now, and this week brought several developments indicate. The most significant may have taken place in New Jersey. The *USA Today* reports [here](#) that “[t]he New Jersey State Municipal Prosecutors Association . . . has come out in favor of legalizing possession of marijuana.” The whole story is worth reading, and cites a Gallup poll finding that 58% of Americans favor legalization. But there's also news from Colorado, where marijuana legalization hasn't ended the black market for pot, according to [this AP story](#). Worse, the *Denver Post* reports [here](#) about a college student who “jumped to his death from a hotel balcony after eating marijuana-infused cookies.” This was apparently the first report of a marijuana-linked death in Colorado since legalization, but it is worth noting that the student was 19, so marijuana consumption wasn't actually legal for him.

Methods of execution. [This Slate article](#) is entitled *What's the Best Way to Execute Someone?* The article sides with those who believe that lethal injection is done “poorly and carelessly” with the “wrong doses” of the “wrong drugs.” The article ponders the firing squad and the guillotine as alternatives. This [post](#) as Sentencing Law & Policy summarizes the article and has a number of interesting comments on the issue from folks on all sides.

Court reporter gone wild. Finally, in New York, a “rogue alcoholic court reporter” has allegedly “wreaked havoc” on the court system by typing “I hate my job” over and over in lieu of actually transcribing the proceedings before him. At least ten appeals have been affected, according to [this story](#) at Above the Law. Why aren't all important proceedings digitally recorded?