



News Roundup

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Although others may be distracted by tonight's Duke-UNC basketball game, we at the School of Government remain laser-focused on emerging criminal law issues. And several interesting issues have been in the news lately:

1. The *News and Observer* [reports today](#) on the Wake County hearing concerning Greg Taylor. Taylor was convicted of murder, but the Innocence Inquiry Commission believes that there is enough evidence of his innocence that a court should consider whether to release him; prosecutors involved in the case oppose Taylor's release. For those not familiar with the work of the Commission, it is authorized and regulated by [G.S. 15A-1460 et seq.](#), and its website is [here](#).
2. The *New York Times* recently ran [this story](#) about a jailhouse lawyer who did what most lawyers never do: convince the Supreme Court to grant a prisoner petition for a writ of certiorari. And he did it twice. Now he's out of prison, gainfully employed, and likely headed to law school.
3. I've [blogged previously](#) about some of the sentencing issues in child pornography cases. An interesting issue that has been raised in several federal courts is whether defendants convicted of possession of child pornography should be required to pay restitution to the children who were abused to make the images that the defendants possessed. That topic is covered nicely by [this New York Times story](#). *Time* also recently jumped into the sex offender fray, with [this article](#) about the well-known sex offender colony under a Miami bridge, and local efforts to soften the residency restrictions that have contributed to the colony's existence.
4. Finally, for readers who are lawyers or who are thinking about going to law school, *Above the Law* has [this post](#) on the starting salary that a lawyer needs to make in order for law school to be a rational investment of time and money. The conclusion is at least \$65,000, if not more. In North Carolina, most new ADA's and public defenders make barely half that. Of course, for many folks on both sides, criminal law is a calling, not just a profession.