

News Roundup

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As the Baltimore Sun [reports](#), a criminal trial against one of the Baltimore police officers charged in connection with the death of Freddie Gray last year ended this week with the officer, Edward Nero, being acquitted on all charges.

According to the report, Nero's acquittal on several misdemeanors came after a five-day bench trial that involved a novel theory of assault based on Nero detaining Gray without justification. The Baltimore Sun also has an [opinion piece](#) from former Baltimore police officers that argues that Nero, characterized as having only a tangential role in the incident that culminated in Gray's death, should not have been criminally charged. Cases against other officers facing more serious charges are scheduled to be tried in the future. Keep reading for more news.

Attorney General Lauds Community Policing. The Fayetteville Observer [reports](#) that Attorney General Loretta Lynch visited Fayetteville on Tuesday to "tout several successful Police Department initiatives she wants to share with the rest of the country." Lynch met with local high school students who serve on Police Chief Harold Medlock's youth advisory council, toured the Police Department, and observed officers' use of body cameras. A range of people quoted in the report, from Justice Department officials to local religious leaders, said that Medlock's efforts to implement community oriented policing strategies and to train officers to be fair and impartial have improved the relationship between the community and the Police Department.

Prosecutors' Role in Justice Reform. The Atlantic has [an article](#) that argues that prosecutors are uniquely situated to drive reform in the criminal justice system because of their autonomy and power. The article is wide ranging and notes, among other things, that there was a substantial increase in the percentage of arrests that resulted in felony rather than misdemeanor charges during the 1990's and 2000's, and that studying prosecutor practices is difficult because of a lack of transparency as to how prosecutorial decisions are made.

Cosby to Stand Trial. The Philadelphia Inquirer [reports](#) that following a preliminary hearing Bill Cosby has been ordered to stand trial on sexual-assault charges. Reportedly, evidence offered in the hearing consisted primarily of statements made in 2005 to police by Cosby and his accuser, Andrea Constand, rather than direct testimony.

New SOG Publication. The News Roundup primarily features criminal law news, but readers may be interested to know that Ann Anderson recently released *Relief from Judgment in North Carolina Civil Cases*, a new book that focuses on the North Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure and case law relevant to obtaining relief from judgment in civil cases. Check it out [here](#).

Sexting. Over on the SOG's civil law blog LaToya Powell has a [post](#) that explores whether North Carolina needs a teen sexting law. She has [previously posted](#) about teen sexting on this blog.

Detroit Police Department Accepts Running Man Challenge. These days it's hard to walk the halls of the SOG without someone grooving out of their office doing the running man on the way to the library or the coffee machine. But we're not the only organization that has accepted the Running Man Challenge, as the Detroit News [reports](#), the Detroit Police Department posted an elaborate video of officers doing the running man in a variety of settings around the city. As with most [videos of cops dancing](#), it went viral. The Detroit video concludes with Chief James Craig dropping a duty belt and calling out the Cincinnati, Philadelphia, New York, and Chicago police departments. Shots fired – figuratively speaking.