

## News Roundup

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A shooting that occurred early Sunday morning in Raleigh has made its way into the national news this week. As CNN [reports](#), Chad Copley has been charged with fatally shooting Kouren-Rodney Bernard Thomas after calling 911 to report that “a bunch of hoodlums” were in front of his house. Copley then told the dispatcher that he was on neighborhood watch, was “locked and loaded,” and was “going to secure [his] neighborhood.” Shortly thereafter, a different person called 911 to report a shooting. The News & Observer [reports](#) that investigators allege that Copley fired a shotgun from inside his garage and hit Bernard who was outside. The case is drawing [comparisons](#) to the incident where Trayvon Martin was shot by George Zimmerman. Keep reading for more news.

**Justice Department Criticizes Baltimore PD.** As the Charlotte Observer [reports](#), this week the Justice Department released a report summarizing its 15-month investigation of the Baltimore Police department. The investigation was prompted by the death of Freddie Gray. [The report](#) is harshly critical of the department, saying that it engages in a pattern or practice of making unconstitutional stops, using discriminatory enforcement strategies, using excessive force, and retaliating against people for engaging in protected expression.

The report includes startling statistics, including that only 3.7% of more than 300,000 pedestrian stops over a five-year period resulted in a citation or arrest; of those stops, 44% occurred in specific African-American districts containing just 11% of the city’s population; and that hundreds of people were stopped more than 30 times during the time period. The report says that officers often lack reasonable suspicion for stops, and routinely conduct illegal searches and make illegal arrests.

**Innocence Hearings.** The News & Observer [reports](#) that hearings are underway this week in Wilmington on a motion for appropriate relief filed by a man who has been incarcerated for decades but claims he is innocent. According to the report, David Bollinger, the key witness in a 1988 murder case against Johnny Small, has testified that he lied at trial when implicating Small. Bollinger claims that investigators threatened to charge him with murder if he did not testify against Small at trial.

**Voting Laws Lawyer.** Last week the News Roundup [noted](#) that politicians who support North Carolina’s recently invalidated Voter Information and Verification Act reportedly consider the Fourth Circuit decision in the case to be politically motivated. This week, the Washington Post has [a profile](#) of a “Democratic superlawyer with [a] multimillion-dollar backing” who is involved in many of the voting law cases around the country, including the North Carolina case.

**Justice Department to Track Arrest Related Deaths.** The New York Times [reports](#) that the Justice Department is planning to ask law enforcement agencies across the country to help it better track deaths that occur in the process of arrest. Updating a system already in place, in [the government’s words](#), “[t]he redesigned methodology includes a standardized mixed method, hybrid approach relying on open sources to identify eligible cases, followed by data requests from law enforcement and medical examiner/coroner offices for incident-specific information about the decedent and circumstances surrounding the event.” What the Department means is that when it learns of a potential arrest-related death, it’s going to send agencies a new form and ask them to fill it out.

**Citizen Police Academy Tragedy.** The Miami Herald [reports](#) that a citizen police academy in Florida took a tragic turn on Tuesday when an officer shot and killed a citizen participant. In an apparent accident during a scenario called

“shoot/don’t shoot” an officer playing the part of a “bad guy” fired a live round that struck retired librarian Mary Knowlton. Typically, the scenario is run using a gun that is not capable of firing real ammunition, it is unclear why such a gun was not being used at the time of the tragedy.