

“Quote Me.”

Notable quotables from around campus

“We live in a culture where if it’s not documented, it doesn’t exist. And if you don’t have people asking who you are, you’re nobody.”

Josh Gamson, assistant professor of sociology, quoted Jan. 17 in *Time* magazine about the phenomenon of ordinary people hiring paparazzi to chronicle their social lives.

“In a matter of months with Barack Obama, we’ve seen white men support a black man for president. We’ve seen the country’s most pro-black president try to manipulate race against a black candidate. These are some transformational things that are happening in Obama himself. For those who support him, he represents an opportunity to deal with race in an unconventional way.”

Politics Professor **James Taylor**, quoted Feb. 17 in the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

“His legacy was settled the day he did the same-sex marriage thing. I will be really impressed if he can do something more to take that off the first line in his bio.”

Corey Cook, assistant professor of politics, quoted in the *San Francisco Chronicle* Jan. 8 in a story about the beginning of San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom’s second term.

“My students were saying it’s extortion... (The RIAA) doesn’t want to negotiate. It’s pay up or we go into federal court.”

Law Professor **Robert Talbot**, quoted in Marketwatch.com in a story about a USF law clinic that provides counseling to students accused of music piracy by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA).

“He understands universities, and I think he really understands how Catholic universities serve the church. He will be very comfortable with this group.”

USF President **Stephen A. Privett, S.J.**, quoted in the *Los Angeles Times* about Pope Benedict XVI’s visit to the U.S. and whether the Pope would chastise American educators for not adhering more strictly to traditional Church teachings.

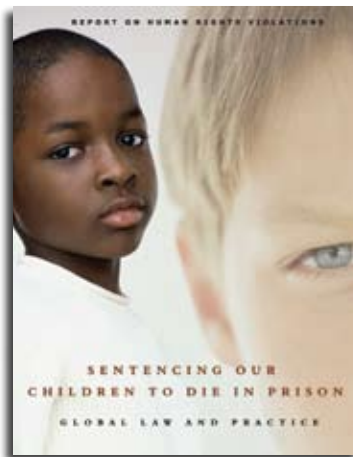
Sentencing Children to Die in Prison

The practice of sentencing juvenile offenders to die in prison by imposing life without parole (LWOP) has been abolished by the vast majority of countries in the world, yet thousands of children are serving such sentences in prisons across the United States, according to a report from the University of San Francisco School of Law’s Center for Law and Global Justice.

With at least 2,381 children sentenced to life without the possibility of parole, the United States is the only remaining nation continuing to impose the sentence, which violates international law.

“The sentence violates customary law binding all nations, and is prohibited by the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child. This is the harshest sentence that can be given short of execution,” said Michelle Leighton, director of human rights programs for the USF Center for Law and Global Justice.

The juvenile death penalty was eliminated in the United States in 2005 by the Supreme Court’s ruling in *Roper v. Simmons*. In that decision, the court cited a brief authored by USF Law Professor Connie de la Vega,



director of the Frank C. Newman International Human Rights Law Clinic, which pointed out that most countries prohibit the execution of criminals who were under 18 at the time of their crime.

“By clarifying the law and facts surrounding the use of life sentences without parole for juvenile offenders, this new report highlights how alone the United States is as a violator of the prohibition against such sentences,” said de la Vega, who co-authored the report with Leighton. “Documentation of the abuse is but the first step in remedying that violation. We hope that it helps to mobilize shame in the international community as well as in the United States so that steps can be taken to stop it.”

According to the report, children of color in the United States are 10 times more likely to receive life without parole than white child offenders. In some states, including California, the rate is 20 to 1.

The report’s impact is already being felt. In March, after presentations from Leighton and others, the U.N. Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination determined that juvenile LWOP sentences are incompatible with U.S. obligations under the treaty. In addition, Leighton and de la Vega have confirmed with Israel, which had been listed with the United States as a country continuing to impose life sentences for juveniles, that children given life sentences are entitled to parole review. There remains the concern that parole review is difficult to pursue and rarely granted. And in September, with help from Professor Nick Imparato of USF’s School of Business and Management, Leighton met with the Tanzanian Ambassador to the United Nations and other officials and prevailed upon them to review the case of the one juvenile offender said to be serving a LWOP sentence and to agree to bring the country’s laws into compliance with the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child. [USF](#)