

## US Boy Abducted to Brazil: CBS Interview Helps American Father

Contributed by Ernest Barteldes  
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Many of us were surprised last Tuesday when Sean Goldman's Brazilian family appeared on CBS' "Early Show" to tell their side of the story. I myself was not aware of the interview until someone I know wrote a comment about it on Facebook, but I quickly logged on to the network's website to check it out.

Now, I am not going to talk about supporters' reactions on either side of the debate. My own position about this case is pretty well known by now - I believe the boy belongs with his biological father. But I will give my impression of what I saw.

The Brazilian family is well aware that the American public opinion is largely against them, and it was clear that they tried to change that by appealing to viewers' emotions.

I noticed that when host Harry Smith mentioned the Hague International Treaty, all stepfather João Paulo Lins e Silva and grandmother Silvana Bianchi had to say was that Sean wanted to stay in Brazil with his half-sister and that he was well adjusted to life there.

Those words were accompanied by current images of the boy participating in a basketball match and playing with his half-sister (the network had conducted an interview with Sean, but it was scrapped for legal reasons).

Now, if they flew for nine hours to get our sympathy, I must say that they failed miserably. Lins e Silva's arrogance was palpable when he said that Sean had spent sixty percent of his life in Brazil and that he felt loved there - you could see that this was an exhausted lawyer who was doing nothing but buying time in order to stall an inevitable verdict.

Harry Smith cleverly extracted from Bianchi that her late daughter acted surreptitiously by announcing her desire to divorce her first husband from almost ten thousand miles away. He was also smart when he let family lawyer Sergio Tostes blab on about what happened in the Brazilian courts when Bruna Bianchi was alive - but then cutting him off with the letter of the law.

CBS was really aiming for ratings when they aired this interview. But contrary to what most have said, I do not think that the interview damaged the case for David Goldman - in fact, it might have helped him, for this is a rare opportunity for American viewers to see what kind of people Goldman has been forced to battle with: these are individuals who - because of their economic power - truly believe they are above the law.

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