

International Custody Case between the U.S. and Brazil

See this post of Solangel Maldonado @ *Concurring Opinions* :



Some of my family law students have been following the international custody case involving Brazil and the United States. According to David Goldman, a New Jersey resident, in June 2004, his wife took their four year-old son, Sean, to Brazil on vacation where he was supposed to join them a week later. However, a few days after arriving in Brazil, his wife informed him she was divorcing him and would remain in Brazil with their son. This case is not unique. Thousands of parents each year remove children from their country of residence and retain them in another country without the other parent's consent, in breach of the other parent's custodial rights. Lawmakers around the world have long known that international child abduction by a parent is a serious problem and have attempted to create a mechanism to ensure that children are returned to their country of residence. Under the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, ratified by 68 nations, the signatory countries agree to promptly return a child who has been wrongfully removed to or retained in another signatory country.

Unfortunately, the Hague's procedural mechanisms do not always work for two reasons. First, courts do not always comply with the Hague and second, even when they do, abducting parents sometimes go into hiding with the child and cannot be found. The retaining country and its law enforcement officials often make little effort to find the child.

The Goldman case clearly illustrates the first reason. (...)

End of the post here.