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Show Recap

THE VIEW on human interest

Thursday, December 7, 2000

Real Life Hot Topics: The Secret Son

Guest: **Juan Campoverde**, didn't know son was given up for adoption; **Susan Chana Lask**, Juan's attorney

Juan Campoverde dated his girlfriend for 10 months and then broke up without knowing she was pregnant. He later tried to locate her to see how she was doing. Juan was able to contact her mother and discovered that he not only had a son, but also that the baby was put up for adoption. As far as the law books are concerned, Juan's girlfriend was never legally bound to tell him he was a father before giving up their child, and now he's fighting to gain full custody of the son he never met.

The boy is now almost 17 months old and has been living with his adopted family for almost a year. It is the only family he knows. Juan believes that it is in the best interest of the child to stay with the adoptive parents if the natural parents want nothing to do with the child. Juan, 20, a single flight attendant, very much wants his son and is ready to take on the role of being a father. He looks forward to raising his son and molding him to be successful in life.

Susan Chana Lask says that because the baby and the adoption were kept a secret from Juan, he can't enforce his rights under the law. Currently, the law states that the father has to form a bond with the child six months before the adoption. "There is a savings clause there that says 'except if he's prevented,'" says Susan. "And here he was prevented. It was a secret from him for a year, so about. So now he's enforcing them. We're going to veto the adoption." Currently, there is no law that says Juan has or doesn't have to be told about the baby. "That's what we're trying to make more clear by Juan's case," says Susan.

It's been over two years and Juan still hasn't spoken with his ex-girlfriend. If he could talk to her, he would thank her for bringing his child into the world and giving him the challenge of getting him back. If Juan is denied custody of his son, he will tell the person who came up with the verdict to go hold their child and tell him how it feels, since that will be the only way he'll know how it feels to hold a child.

Our producers spoke to the attorney representing Juan's ex-girlfriend and they declined to comment.

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