

Identifying Information

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Title:	Legacy Stewards
Abstract:	<p>Who should manage your social life after you die? With the proliferation of social media accounts, widespread digital content production, and advances in CGI and hologram technologies, a person's social presence increasingly extends into the digital afterlife. But how a deceased individual appears in the day-to-day lives of family, friends, fans, and followers largely hinges upon who is given legal decision-making authority over their ongoing social interactions—their cultural legacy. The primary areas of law that regulate a person's cultural legacy—trusts & estates, copyright, publicity rights, and newly-enacted digital assets laws—take very different approaches towards legacy stewardship. Each area of law prioritizes one of five different stakeholders in making decisions about a decedent's continuing cultural life: (1) the family, (2), the market, (3) the state, (4) the public, and (5) the decedents themselves. This Article examines stewardship by each of these entities, and it suggests a series of reforms that better accounts for the many stakeholders in a person's ongoing interactions with the world they leave behind.</p>