

A German Court Ruled That the Parents of a Teenager Who Died Tragically Could Inherit Her Facebook Content | Quartz

By Hanna Kozłowska

July 13, 2018

Germany's highest court ruled Thursday (July 12) that the parents of a teenager who died in 2012 after being hit by a train should be allowed to access her Facebook account, including her private messages.

The court [argued](#) that digital content should be passed onto heirs like letters, books, or diaries. The girl's parents wanted to look into her account to determine whether she committed suicide. This would also help determine whether the driver of the train should be entitled to compensation.

[...]

As more of our lives are online, the question of what happens to our data after we die becomes both more complicated and pressing. The wishes of family members of a person who has passed away often run into the terms of service of Silicon Valley companies that store their data. In the US, the girl's parents would not be able to obtain her private messages in a similar situation, Gene Newman, editorial director of Everplans, a company that creates digital estate archives, told Quartz.

Source: [A German Court Ruled that the parents of a teenager who died tragically could inherit her Facebook content — Quartz](#)