

New Book about Disastrous Celebrity Estate Cases

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What do Michael Jackson's mistakes, Marlon Brando's mess-ups, Frank Sinatra's faux pas, Jerry Garcia's gaffes and Leona Helmsley's lapses in their estate planning have to do with yours?

"Everything," explain husband-and-wife legacy attorneys Danielle and Andrew Mayoras, co-authors of the entertaining and enlightening new book, *Trial & Heirs: Famous Fortune Fights* (Wise Circle Books, \$19.95).

It's a great book for estate planning lawyers to give to clients to illustrate the disasters that will happen without good legal advice.

Of course, the same estate errors that millionaire celebrities make when divvying up their wealth before they die also apply to the rest of us. They can divide the intended heirs for years, and wreck the loved one's lives during prolonged probate battles that could have been completely avoided with proper planning.

- Lady Di left a detailed will, but also a separate letter expressing different wishes. The letter was ignored.
- Former Chief Justice Warren Burger left a 176-word will. It failed to give his co-executors the power to sell real estate and pay taxes.
- Michael Jackson left a will, but it included an unfunded family trust. This meant the estate had to go through probate, leading to a nasty fight over who would administer the estate.
- Martin Luther King died without a will, leading to lawsuits filed against each other by his three children. As a result a movie about his life was never made.

"Our goal is to use celebrity stories to get families talking about the sometimes uncomfortable subjects of wills and trusts, and to motivate them to do this critical planning," said Danielle B. Mayoras, a renowned estate planning attorney, educator and gerontologist.

"Estate fights don't just happen to the rich and famous," said Andrew W. Mayoras, a successful probate attorney and author of the popular probatelawyerblog.com. "As a litigator, I've seen firsthand how families are torn apart due to poor or incomplete planning on the part of their deceased relatives."

The authors hope to spark a national conversation from Sunset Boulevard to Main Street by explaining the basics of wills and trusts, discussing the importance of having a good attorney, and starting family discussions about well-publicized celebrity cases.-----

For more on this topic, call:

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