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Estates & Wills & Trusts

Hattie Poole estate dispute



By [Charles Ticker](#)

[Duane Albert Poole](#) (deceased September 17, 2012) was a successful American businessman and the founder of International Communications, a communications company founded in 1956. Under his guidance, International Communications became an industry leader over a period of over 50 years. Recently, it has been [reported](#) that his widow, Ms. Hattie Poole (who is 85 years old) is in a relationship with a man named Ben Marek who is 30 years younger. Ms. Poole's estate has been estimated to be several million dollars.

Ms. Poole inherited control of International Communications. Allegations have apparently been made by Ms. Poole's sons that Mr. Marek is manipulating Ms. Poole. Some of these include that Mr. Marek has been placed on payroll with International Communications despite not working for the company, and that property has been transferred to him by Ms. Poole. None of these allegations have been proven in court. Further complicating this matter is that it has been alleged that Ms. Poole suffers from memory loss.

The Hattie Poole estate dispute is an interesting scenario that illustrates some of the issues that may come up when a surviving spouse becomes involved with another significantly younger partner. It is not uncommon for potential beneficiaries to take issue with the activities of a surviving spouse especially if they perceive the new relationship to be manipulative or exploitative. The likelihood of [estate disputes](#) increases significantly if someone in Ms. Poole's position is perceived by potential beneficiaries to be squandering their estate as a result of undue influence from the new partner.

If the surviving spouse has diminished capacity, it opens the door for potential beneficiaries to become directly involved in the affairs of the estate by attempting to obtain control of the person's financial affairs through court process. Another option is to seek direction from a court on whether or not the person in question has the requisite mental capacity or control his or her affairs. As soon as capacity becomes an issue, it can lead to expensive [estate litigation](#) among the parties with interests in the estate.

It will be interesting to see what happens next in the Hattie Poole estate dispute.

For more updates on the Hattie Poole estate dispute click [here](#).

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