

Title: Un-marketed Legacies: Tolstoy's Works and Private Papers

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This paper will examine the history of Tolstoy's renunciation of the copyright on his works, from its contentious beginnings during the author's life and early posthumous years through the Soviet period and beyond. It will explore the notion of an un-marketed legacy as a sign of sincerity—a suggestion that words not sold by the author gain some purchase on integrity. We will also consider how these early “free-texts” can be related to current practices of free distribution of texts through digital media. Finally, we will consider how these practices relate to the views of Barthes and Foucault on the death of the author. Here we will bring in a last group of texts, Tolstoy's unpublished manuscripts, which are held under strict control at the Tolstoy Museum in Moscow. The continued protection of these private papers suggests that much is still vested in the veiled subjectivity of the author, even in the age when the potential of his published texts to represent that subjectivity has come under question.