

New paper creates a framework for families and communities to wrestle control of their data away from Big Tech

This innovative proposal corrects the imbalance between users who co-produce data and tech companies that collect and equip the data.

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA, UNITED STATES, August 31, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Every day, people trade pieces of themselves to digital services for small, often non-essential conveniences.

“

The incentives driving AI development and the larger digital economy are often at odds with the values and interests of American families and communities.”

Daniel Cochrane

Companies that have lawyers, lobbyists, and their own trade associations creates an imbalance of power that makes it hard to say no to. To date, our rights are no match for the big data economy.

The Institute for Family Studies is proposing a new class of rights for the digital age in order to correct this imbalance.

Associational data rights will belong to each individual and communal data subject, and formal associations should be created to negotiate on behalf of these parties.

As the paper explains, Data Rights Associations should be formed through legislation to collectively bargain on behalf of data co-producers, under a given set of rules and guidelines. These would be voluntary membership organizations designed to give people a say in how their data is collected and used.

The paper is broken up into three parts:

Part I argues that data is a co-produced good. Yet, control over its collection and use is concentrated in the hands of tech firms.

Part II makes the case for why both individual data rights and top-down data privacy regimes often fail to vindicate privacy, control, and economic interests.

Part III proposes a new class of informational rights.

Daniel Cochrane, Senior Fellow with the Family First Technology Initiative at the Institute for Family Studies, co-authored the paper alongside scholars at the RadicalxChange Foundation, OpenMined, the University of Michigan, and Arizona State University.

“The AI revolution's success or failure turns on whether it advances or undermines the wellbeing of families and the broader conditions necessary for their flourishing. A future without the family is no future at all. Yet, the incentives driving AI development and the larger digital economy are often at odds with the values and interests of American families and communities,” Cochrane said.

“Our legislative framework could change that. It would give households and civil society the right to form or join Data Rights Associations and collectively bargain with tech corporations to set rules governing AI's reach and influence across core domains of human life. Families and communities should not be left holding the bag when Silicon Valley ‘moves fast and breaks things.’ Rather, we must give our bedrock institutions a voice to steer AI and the digital economy towards a pro-human, pro-family future.”

This paper does not fit neatly into the left and right's political categories. Instead, it breaks open a new frontier of policy discussions about data rights during a time of intense backlash to AI and social media.

[It can be found here.](#)

About IFS

The Institute for Family Studies is a non-partisan research organization dedicated to strengthening marriage and family life through evidence-based research and public education.

James Lynch
Institute for Family Studies
+1 917-748-8604
[email us here](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/938450214>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.