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PROVIDING SPATIAL DATA FOR SECONDARY ANALYSIS: ISSUES AND CURRENT PRACTICES RELATING TO CONFIDENTIALITY

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ABSTRACT

Spatially explicit data pose a series of opportunities and challenges for all the actors involved in providing data for long-term preservation and secondary analysis -- the data producer, the data archive, and the data user. We report on opportunities and challenges for each of the three players, and then turn to a summary of current thinking about how best to prepare, archive, disseminate, and make use of social science data that have spatially explicit identification. The core issue that runs through the paper is the risk of the disclosure of the identity of respondents. If we know where they live, where they work, or where they own property, it is possible to find out who they are. Those involved in collecting, archiving, and using data need to be aware of the risks of disclosure and become familiar with best practices to avoid disclosures that will be harmful to respondents.

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