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Sommario/riassunto

Americans are increasingly concerned about the privacy of personal data--yet we demand more and more information for public decision making. This volume explores the seeming conflicts between privacy and data access, an issue of concern to federal statistical agencies collecting the data, research organizations using the data, and individuals providing the data. A panel of experts offers principles and specific recommendations for managing data and improving the balance between needed government use of data and the privacy of respondents. The volume examines factors such as the growth of computer technology, that are making confidentiality an increasingly critical problem. The volume explores how data collectors communicate with data providers, with a focus on informed consent to use data, and describes the legal and ethical obligations data users have toward individual subjects as well as toward the agencies providing the data. In the context of historical practices in the United States, Canada, and Sweden, statistical techniques for protecting individuals' identities are evaluated in detail. Legislative and regulatory restraints on access to data are examined, including a discussion about their effects on research. This volume will be an important and thought-provoking guide for policymakers and agencies working with statistics as well as researchers and concerned individuals.