The GIS professional recognizes the impact of his or her work on individual people and will strive to avoid harm to them. Therefore, the GIS professional will:

1. Respect Privacy
   - Protect individual privacy, especially about sensitive information.
   - Be especially careful with new information discovered about an individual through GIS-based manipulations (such as geocoding) or the combination of two or more databases.

2. Respect Individuals
   - Encourage individual autonomy. For example, allow individuals to withhold consent from being added to a database, correct information about themselves in a database, and remove themselves from a database.
   - Avoid undue intrusions into the lives of individuals.
   - Be truthful when disclosing information about an individual.
   - Treat all individuals equally, without regard to race, gender, or other personal characteristic not related to the task at hand.

Alexandra Serio Younica, GISP
King’s College

Presented:
Association of American Geographers
Sunday, April 18, 2010
Presentation Overview

• Encroachment of Ethics into Classroom

• Relationship of GIS and Ethics

• Student Perceptions of Ethics
Intersection of GIS and Ethics

• Access to personal, yet public, data
  – Home prices assessment and sales figures
  – Registered sex offender information

• Collection and distribution of controversial datasets
  – Hate crimes
  – Species population
GIS and Ethics in the Undergraduate Classroom
### Table 13 - Pennsylvania

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<th>Agency name</th>
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...research shows that the Canadian polar bear population has increased 25 percent from 12,000 to 15,000 during the past decade...
Context of Ethics to Prevent Damage

People
Environment
Businesses

Moral Obligation
Principles
Good vs. Bad

Data Distribution
Data Display
Ethics into Classroom Discussion

• All data, geospatial or not, has ethical considerations

• Concerns with data:
  – Source
  – Author
  – Purpose

• Open forum for students to consider and explore the above
Student Profiles

- Undergraduates
- Academic major varies

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Posing the Question

• What constitutes an ethical concern in GIS

• What is an example of an ethically sensitive GIS data layer and why*

• What actions can be taken... to ensure data of this nature is treated/delivered responsibly

*Sex offenders and hate crimes were precluded as responses due to prior discussions
The Answers
Overall

**Expected**
Responses based on topics with an ‘obvious’ ethical component as well as reflective of current events

**Unexpected**
Social issues comprised 100% of responses from students heavily influenced by natural issues in both the classroom and via course of study
In Closing

• Continue exploring student views on GIS/Ethics
• Explore relationship of study and ethics

Thank you

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