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**Jan J. Dijkstra** (jdiikstr@obelix.math.ua.edu), Department of Mathematics, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487, and **Stoyu T. Barov\*** (stoyu@ua.edu), Department of Mathematics, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487. *On boundary avoiding continuous selections.*

We discuss controlling continuous extensions of functions defined on normal and paracompact spaces into Banach spaces. We prove a general result concerning boundary avoiding continuous selections into Banach spaces and that allows us to characterize normal and paracompact spaces as well as paracompact spaces by means of selections. In addition, we obtain some other results involving extensions of products and of disjoint families of functions. (Received September 20, 2000)