Eli Pariser writes in his book <u>The Filter Bubble What the Internet is Hiding From You</u> that companies like Apple. Facebook, Google, Yahoo and even Amazon.com use personalized filters for different reasons. Amazon.com uses personalization to recommend products to customers they purchase based on their past purchases while companies like Google and Facebook seek to personalize search results which can be far more dangerous and risky for users trying to access news and information online.

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckeberg has suggested Facebook is a 21st century social utility for advanced telecommunications but shrugs off privacy concerns saying individuals don't have to use Facebook if they don't want to. However, this argument is weak at best considering no telephone company could get away with saying we are going to record individual's phone conversations and if you don't like that don't use a phone.

Yet that's exactly how Facebook is defending itself from such privacy concerns and this exposes the flaws in their attempts to justify the way they do business. Now on the matter of children's privacy there is no doubt Congress should amend the 1986 Electronic Communications and Privacy Act. Part of the problem today is the law just hasn't caught up to the technology. However, there are things the U.S. Federal Trade Commission or FTC can do with pro consumer privacy regulations in the Internet era. Therefore I support common sense, reasonable measures by the FTC to strengthen privacy of individuals online.

Recently Google reached a settlement with the FTC over privacy violations involving Apple's Safari browser which resulted in them paying a fine to the U.S. Government and a promise to not commit such violations again. However, the usual amount of such fines is chump change for companies like Google. The fines should usually be higher but not too high that they are deemed excessive and unjust and these companies should be required to pay the consumers they are victimizing not the federal government.