The Dangers of Unregulated Industry

While the United States is seen around the world as one of the world’s economic leaders because of its free market capitalist system which promotes rapid economic growth, this almost laissez faire style economy has dangerous downsides. When employing little to no regulations, the economy begins to grow at breakneck pace only to eventually crash as it did in the Great Depression (Causes of the Great Depression, n.p.) and in the 2008 financial crisis (Rampell, n.p.).

My partner argues that there should be absolutely no regulation on search engines because if America regulates Google, it might stymie Google’s growth, negatively impacting the entire American economy. Yet at a basic level, the United States government’s concern should not be with the well-being of a company. The government should prioritize the lives of its citizens over the growth of a company. As a result, the United States government should follow Europe’s lead and demand that Google alter its privacy policy (Rampell, n.p.). With most features of web services that some might feel uncomfortable about in terms of privacy violation, there is an option to simply choose not to allow the company to use the service which you might feel uncomfortable with. For example, location services must be enabled, but users who do not wish to use location services can still use their phones. On the other hand, Google was forcing its users to essentially agree to let it commit what some users might see as an obvious form of invasion of privacy, or otherwise stop using Google at all. Additionally for some this is almost
impossible, as not using Google would mean not having an email address, or for those using Google phones, complete inability to use their phones. A curious aspect about the information Google is collecting about users compared to users’ reactions is its comparison with the kind of information the NSA was collecting about United States citizens. While many people were outraged in hearing that the NSA was collecting metadata, the only information they were collecting was the duration of phone calls and who was being called and received (Granick, n.p.). Google on the other hand is collecting mass amounts of data based on users’ activities on the web.

Returning to the central question of regulation though, it does not make sense to argue for no regulation at all. While China’s level of regulation of Google is an unnecessary overreaction and a clear violation of the freedom of speech, some regulation is almost always vital. For if there is no regulation, Google and other search engine companies will just continue to push the envelope in terms of violating personal privacy until they are recording everyone at all times. In order to prevent this, the United States government must find a way to regulate search engines when they cross the line while not regulating too much and infringing on the freedom of speech.

Bibliography
