



# Freedom of Speech in Cyberspace

- The Web sites of the:
- -FBI (Federal Bureau Investigation) and
- NCMEC (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children)
- Provide information about risks to children and guidelines for reducing them.



# Freedom of Speech in Cyberspace

- Place the computer in a living room or family room where the child using it can easily be occasionally observed by a parent
- Software filtering products such as:
  - 1. Cyber Patrol
  - 2. X-stop
  - 3. Surf Watch
  - 4. Net Nanny
- Block access to sites that contain material that might be inappropriate for a child



# Freedom of Speech in Cyberspace

- Many products allow parents
  - -to choose categories to filter
  - -their own lists of banned sites
  - -review a log of sites their child visits
- Parents have responsibilities
  - - to supervise their children
  - - to teach them how to deal with inappropriate material and threats



# Freedom of Speech in Cyberspace

- **Censorship Laws**

- o In the 1990s as more technical people began using the Internet

- a variety of religious organizations
    - anti-pornography groups
    - groups that objected to other kinds of material

began a campaign to pass federal legislation to censor the Net



# Freedom of Speech in Cyberspace

- Other people and organizations such as
  - o Librarians
  - o Publishers
  - o Internet companies
  - o Civil liberties group
- Opposed such legislation



# Freedom of Speech in Cyberspace

- In 1995, the FBI reported that Utilization of Online services or Bulletin-board system
  - o Becoming one of the most prevalent techniques for individuals
    - ✓ to share pornographic pictures of minors
    - ✓ to identify and recruit children for involving and producing inappropriate materials



# Freedom of Speech in Cyberspace

- Popular news magazines shocked the public with dramatic cover stories on Cyberporn
- Increasing publicity from different organization and political pressure led Congress to pass the **Communications Decency Act (CDA) of 1996**



# Freedom of Speech in Cyberspace

- The law is:
- If anyone who made available to anyone under 18 any communication that is obscene or indecent would be subject to a fine of USD100000 and two years in prison.
- Opponents saw the CDA as a profound threat to freedom of expression



# Freedom of Speech in Cyberspace

- A broad collection of:
  - i) Organizations
  - ii) Business
  - iii) internet providers and
  - iv) individuals sued to block it
- In 1997, two federal courts:
  - ✓ the Supreme Court and
  - ✓ American Civil Liberties Union *et. al.*

***Ruled that the censorship provisions of the CDA were unconstitutional***



# Freedom of Speech in Cyberspace

- The decisions against the CDA established that ***the Internet deserves the highest protection from government intrusion***

# Freedom of Speech in Cyberspace

- The Child Online Protection Act
  - In 1998, Congress imposed Child Online Protection Act (COPA)
  - This law was more limited than CDA
  - The LAW is:
    - ✓ Offenses would be punished by a USD 50000 fine and six months in jail
    - ✓ Sites with potentially "harmful" material would have to get proof of age from site visitors

# Freedom of Speech in Cyberspace

- Another provision of COPA set up the **Child Online Protection Commission** to study and report on ways to protect children
- The commission included representatives from:
  - ✓ family organizations
  - ✓ government
  - ✓ universities and
  - ✓ industry



# Freedom of Speech in Cyberspace

- Its report said that most of the material of serious concern on the Internet is illegal
- To protect the child, it encouraged
  - ✓ educational efforts and
  - ✓ the use of technological protections including filtering software



# Freedom of Speech in Cyberspace

- **The Children Internet Protection Act**
- Organizations like *Family Research Council* continued pressure for laws to prevent minors from obtaining sexual explicit material on the Internet.
- In 2000, Congress passed the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)

# Freedom of Speech in Cyberspace

- The laws targets Internet terminals in **schools and libraries** that participate in certain federal programs for receiving federal money for technology
- It requires that such schools and libraries must install filtering software on all Internet terminals to block access to sites with
  - Child pornography
  - Obscene material and
  - Material harmful to minors