Questions:

1. **What are some examples of subtle data collection mentioned in the paragraph, and how are they different from explicit data collection?**

   Answer: Subtle data collection examples include credit companies recording purchasing habits, websites recording visitor identities, and social activists noting license plate numbers. Unlike explicit collection, these methods don't involve direct communication with the subject, making them less noticeable. The subjects might not be aware that information is being collected, and databases are being constructed without their knowledge.

2. **How does the paragraph highlight the potential positive and negative impacts of data collection, specifically in the context of database applications?**

   Answer: The paragraph emphasizes that technology enables the easy collection of vast data amounts, with positive outcomes like personalized services but also negative consequences. Data, when linked through advanced database technology, reveals both positive aspects, such as targeted marketing, and negatives, like potential privacy infringements. The ramifications are substantial and extend beyond academic debate to become tangible realities.

3. **What are the challenges associated with legal remedies, as mentioned in the paragraph, in addressing the abusive use of databases?**

   Answer: The paragraph suggests that passing laws against actions doesn't necessarily prevent them. The Privacy Act of 1974 in the United States aimed to protect citizens from database abuse, requiring government agencies to publish database information for public access. However, slow compliance and bureaucratic hurdles rendered this legal remedy less effective in practice.

4. **How does public opinion play a role in controlling database abuse, and what examples are provided in the paragraph to support this?**

   Answer: Public opinion is presented as a potent force in deterring database abuse, as penalties in the form of negative public perception can outweigh

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benefits. Examples include credit bureaus ceasing to sell lists due to public backlash and Google discontinuing Google Buzz in response to public criticism. Government agencies, like the Social Security Administration, also adjusted plans based on public concerns about data security.