

the digital divide & privacy

Who are people who are left? What is their deal?
Things to know and think about.

<librarian.net/talks/privacy>

scope note



Fig. 27.



I am mostly talking about the social issues involved in privacy, not the software or hardware. More like the wetware, the things we need to think about when dealing with real life privacy issues in our libraries. ###

**When someone tells me
the digital divide is over.**



My area is small rural libraries and the digital divide. People like to be all "Oh hey aren't libraries so last century?" and I'm all "No, no way, not really at all, nope." But the problem has shifted as have the challenges that come along with those shifts. I'll outline a few things here that have to do with today's topic: privacy. ###

15%

15% of American adults do not use the internet at all.
An additional 9% of adults use the internet but not at home.

Pew Research Center

librarian.net/talks/privacy

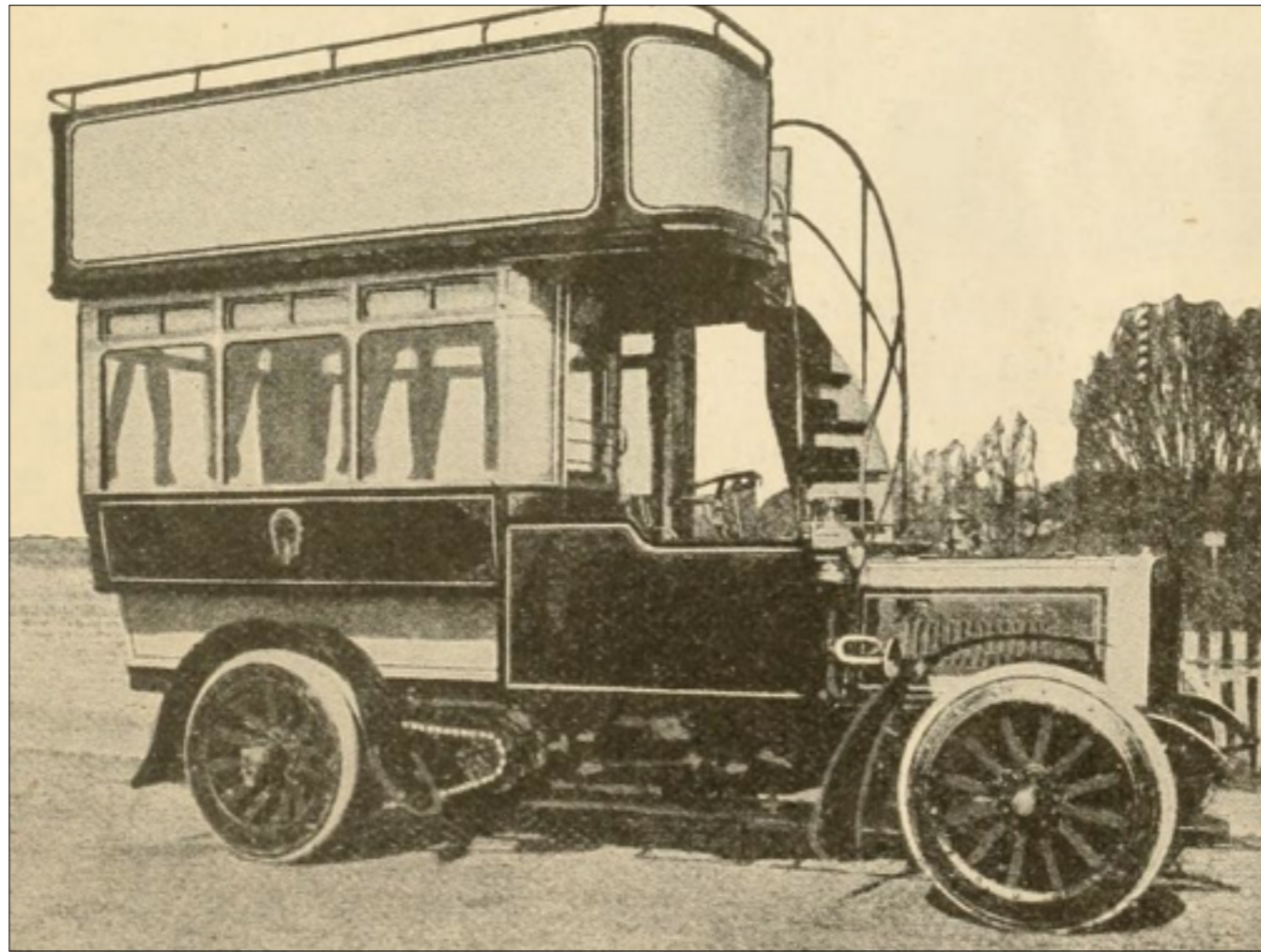
Let's start here. This is a true fact. And what's weird is I've been doing variants on this talk for a decade and the number used to move and it doesn't anymore. Those 15% are staying put. ###

WTF

Really? Don't they want to see their grandchildren, get cheap printer ink, send people photos of their genitals and apply for health care? No? No.

<librarian.net/talks/privacy>

The question many people ask is this one. ###



My feeling about the digital divide is like this.... it's fine if you don't want to use a computer. But it's like not driving a car. The person who can't drive understands the realities of using public transportation or asking other people for rides. They understand the costs. This is not the same for people not using computers. The costs of remaining offline are hidden, or at least they are right up until your town floods and the only way to interact with FEMA is through a web page. Awkward. ###

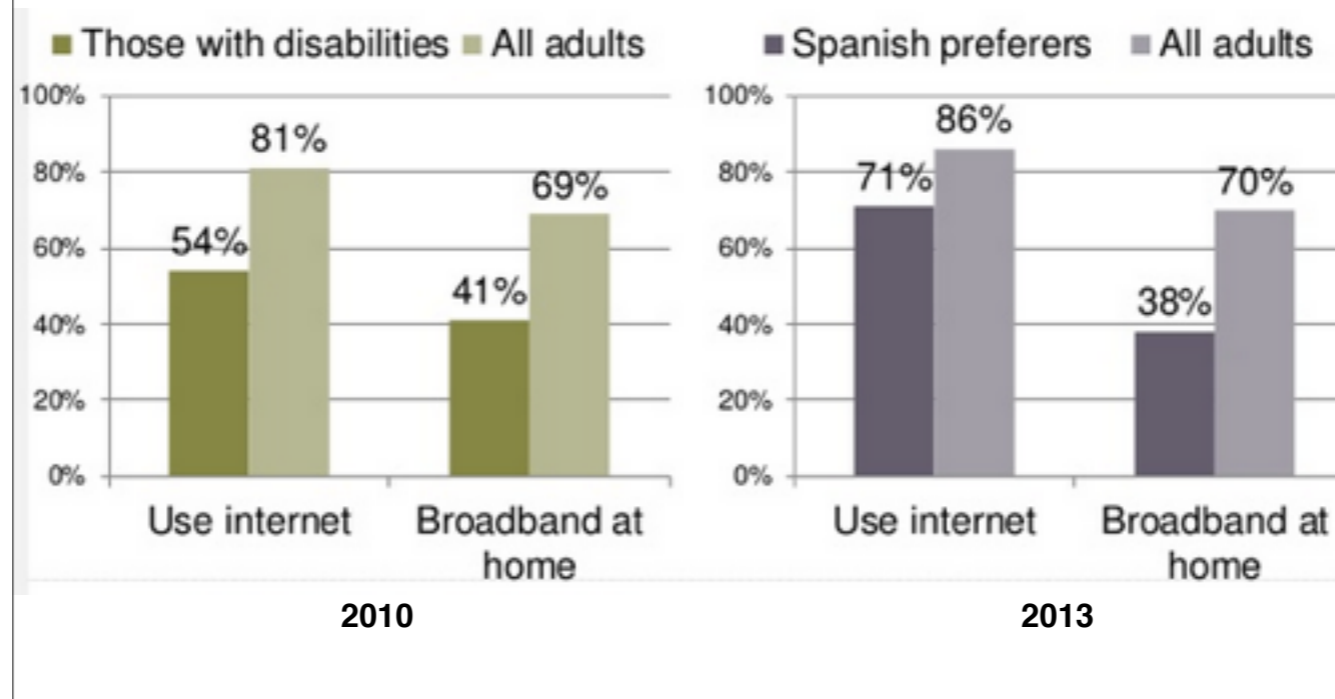
People are (still) offline for two major reasons.

1. Can't get.
- 2. Don't want.**

<librarian.net/talks/privacy>

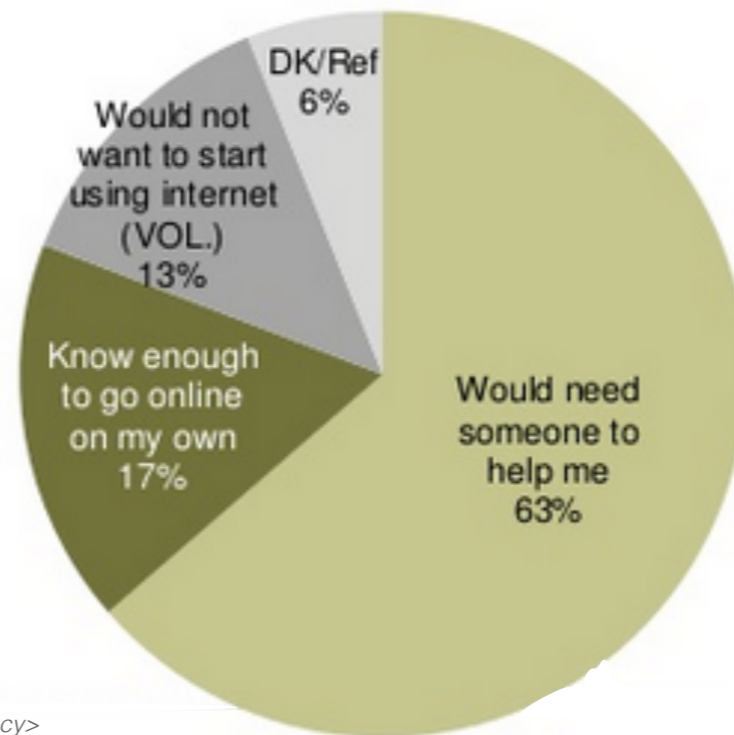
Can't do much about the "can't get" people except working the problem. But the "don't want" people.. there's some work to be done there. ###

Who is left offline?



When we look at the numbers—the numbers barely anyone is counting because they don't like the story they tell—we realize that the people who are getting left behind are the people with all the other challenges - economic, education, mental, physical. ###

What do they need?



<librarian.net/talks/privacy>

More importantly, those people offline? They can't get online alone. As the digital divide has been shrinking this piece of the pie gets bigger. They need help, they need our help. And that help is not just "here's how to use a mouse" it's about socially understanding what the internet is and how to be safe. ###

Offline people learn about privacy from very few places.

1. People who want to sell them something.
2. Fear-mongers, the media & unrealistic nerds.
3. Real people like their friends and **you**.

People who are still offline in 2016, who have the ability but not the desire to get online, are often afraid. They are afraid because they read the newspaper (which is made up of people who are also afraid) and the news is dire. ###



they take their cues from you. ###

“

**The only thing we
have to fear is...
fear itself —
nameless,
unreasoning,
unjustified terror...**

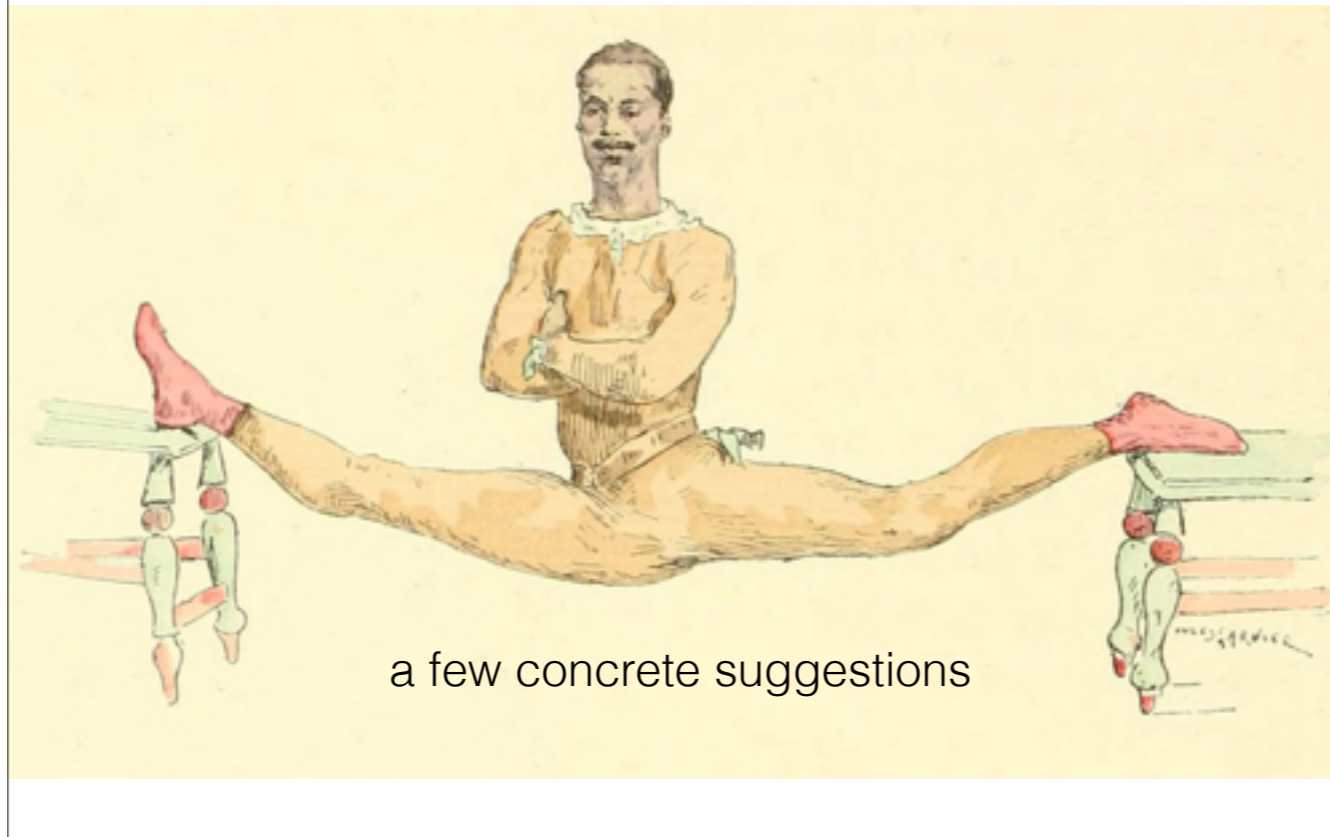
- FDR

librarian.net/talks/privacy



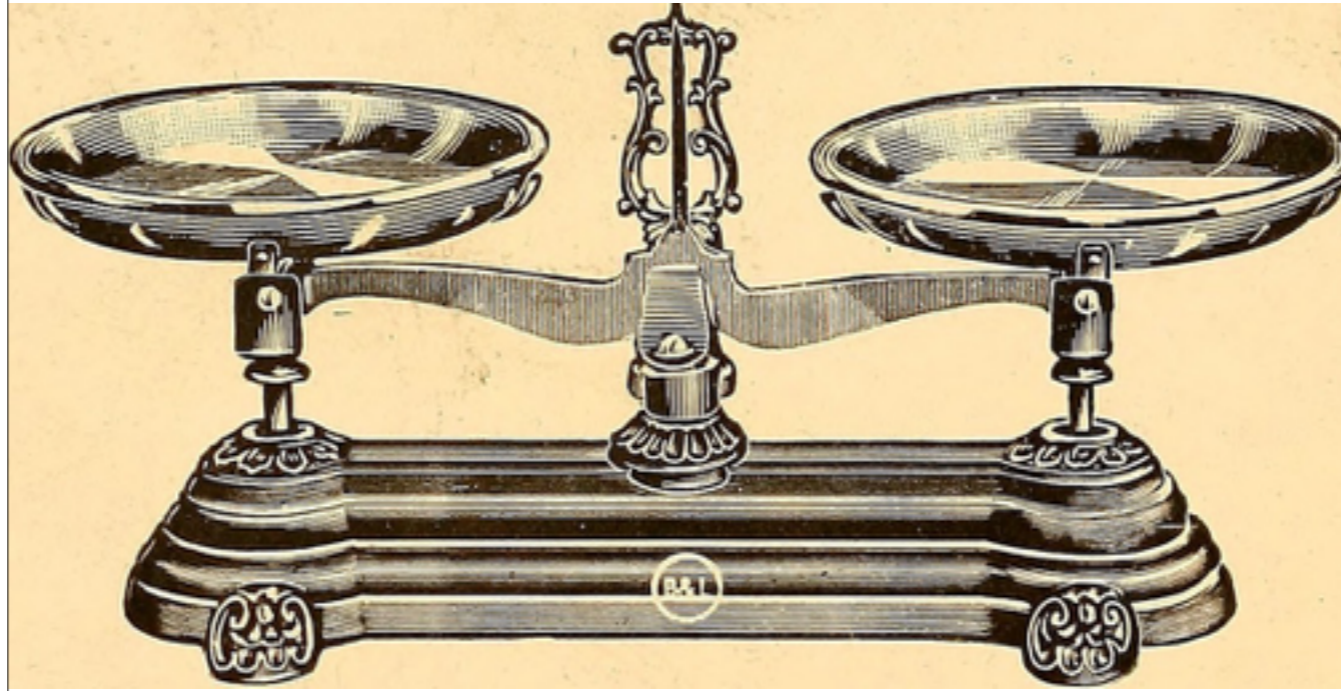
Many of these people are afraid, trepidatious, anxious. And so we're going to look at working on their anxiety issue as a way of solving the real problem. And learning to balance privacy with the very real concern that by being too fear oriented we're actually keeping people offline. Here are some things that I do. ###

balancing acts: privacy vs. realism



So there are things where there is the MOST PRIVATE approach and the one that will actually work. Using a password manager really is great, except if people wind up not using it and using the same password over and over. If you can get them to write down passwords that are actually strong and different, that may be a better compromise. ###

1. passwords



14

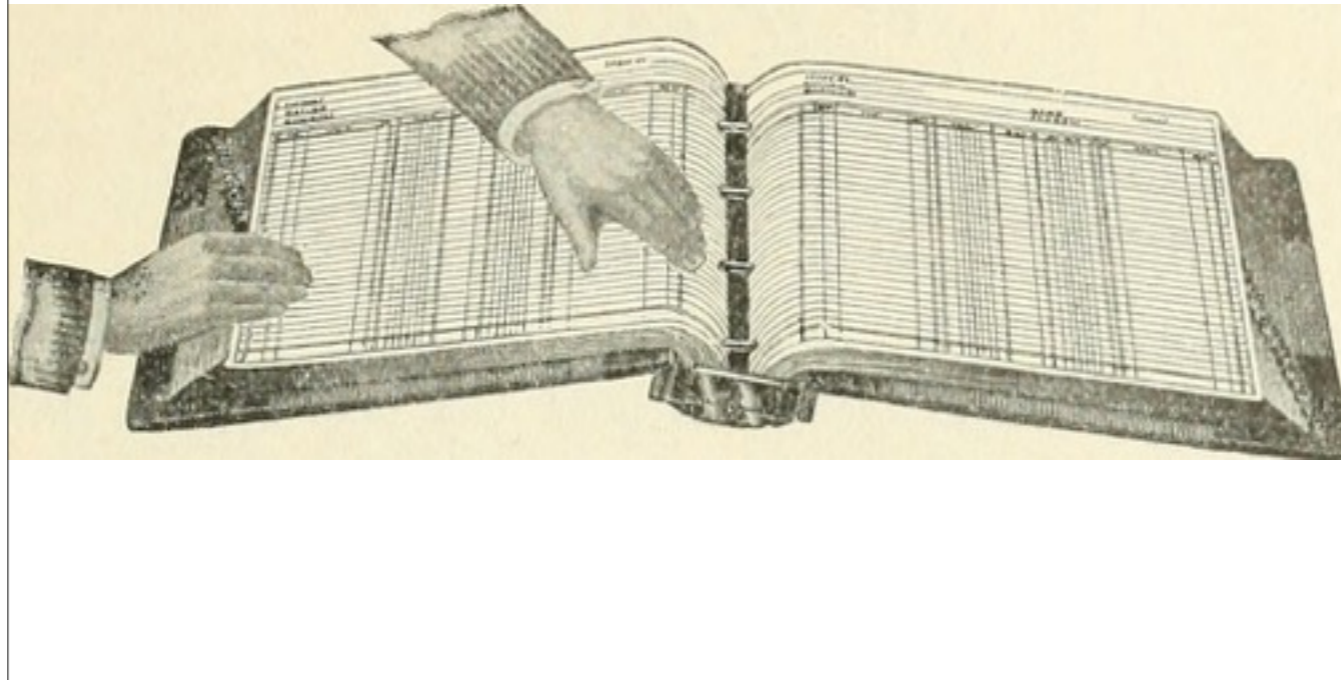
so, speaking of passwords... ###

"Why you need a bazillion character password.."



Users have a lot of things that they are upset about, I try to explain without over-explaining, why some things are like this. Sometimes understanding the why helps you get people to be part of their own solution. ###

"...and how to write it down"



and so it may be that helping people accept and deal with passwords, and get online, and endure YET another login, is going to be keeping a password book. Less secure, maybe a realistic approach. ###

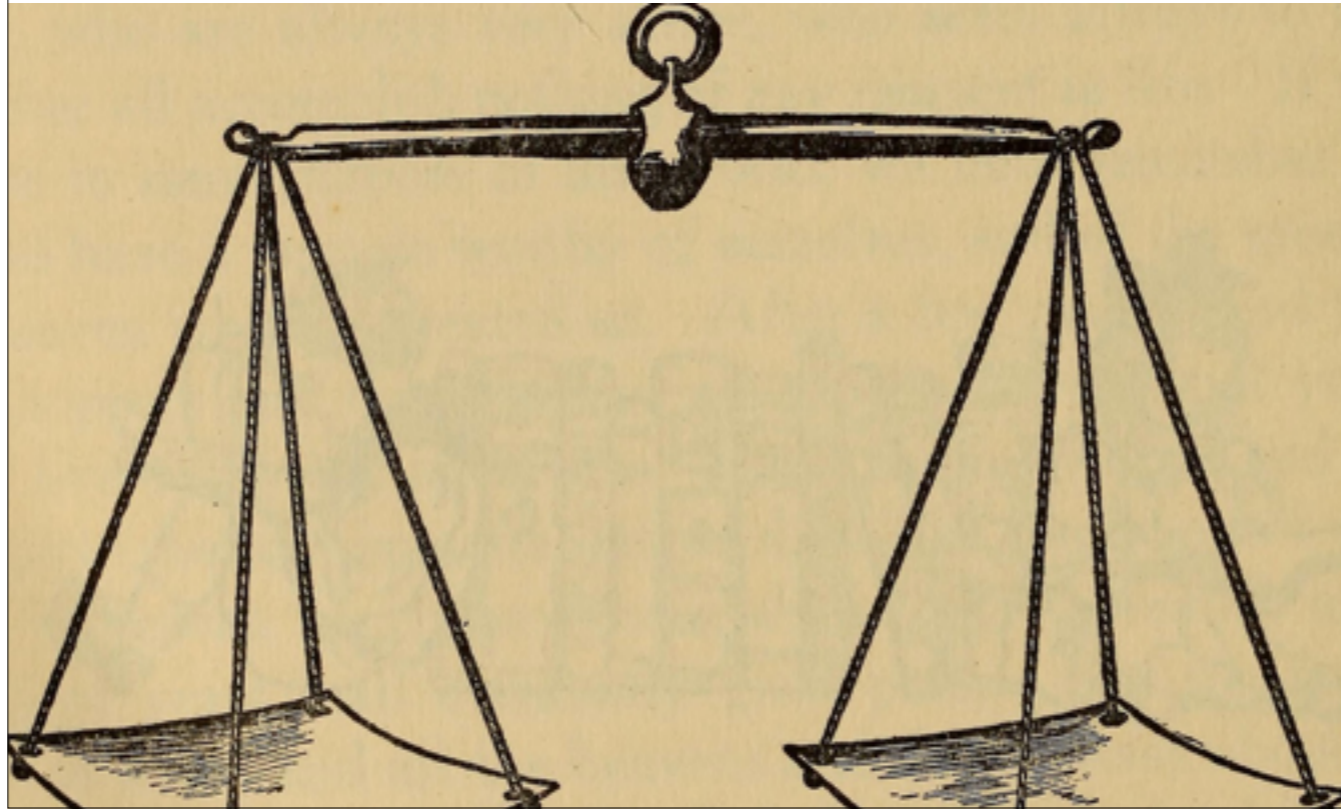
70%

...of all stolen personal information is taken from a business.
...of all reported child identity fraud is "friendly fraud."

Identity Theft Resource Center

And let's have some real talk about where they are more likely to get their identity stolen. From a family member. From Target. From Disneyworld. The internet is unknown (to them) but that doesn't mean it's actually where they are most at risk. Sort of like how I'm always telling myself that I'm safer on the airplane than in my bathroom. Sometimes stats help. ###

2. getting help

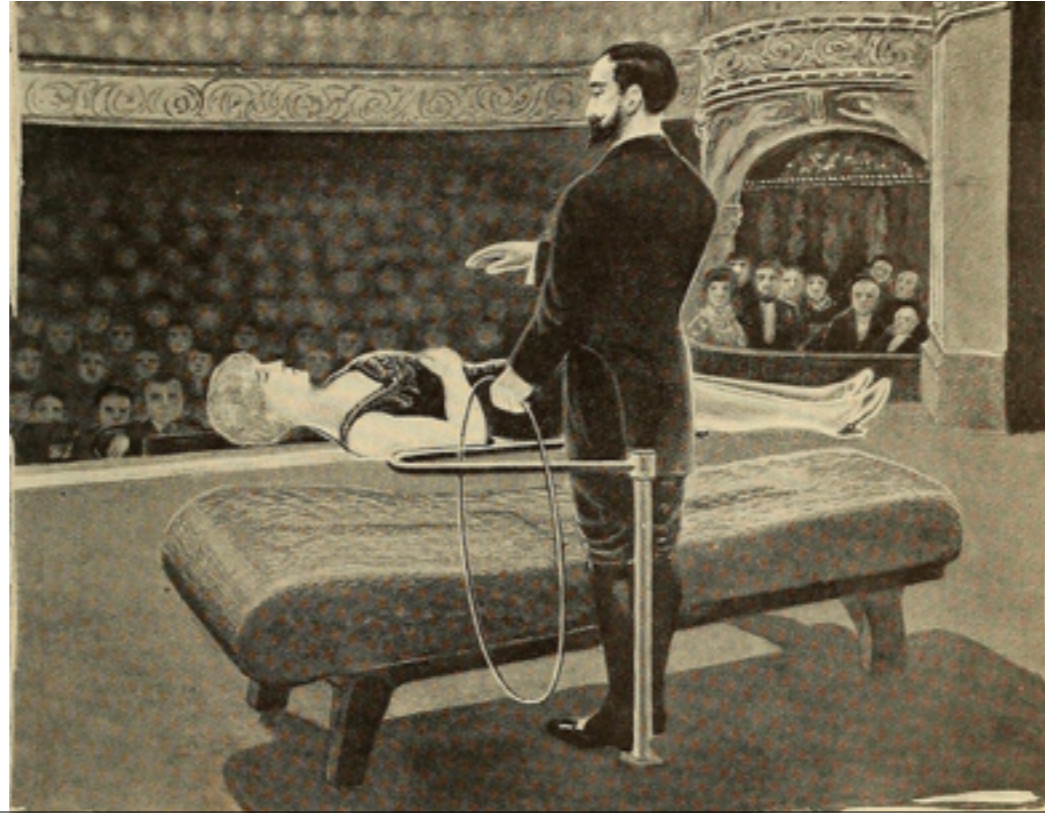


A lot of times people are worried about interacting online because they don't know what to do when something bad happens and, again, they are concerned about solving the problem wrong. Don't know about you but we have had a lot of people here reporting phone calls "Hey your computer has a virus" sorts of things... ###



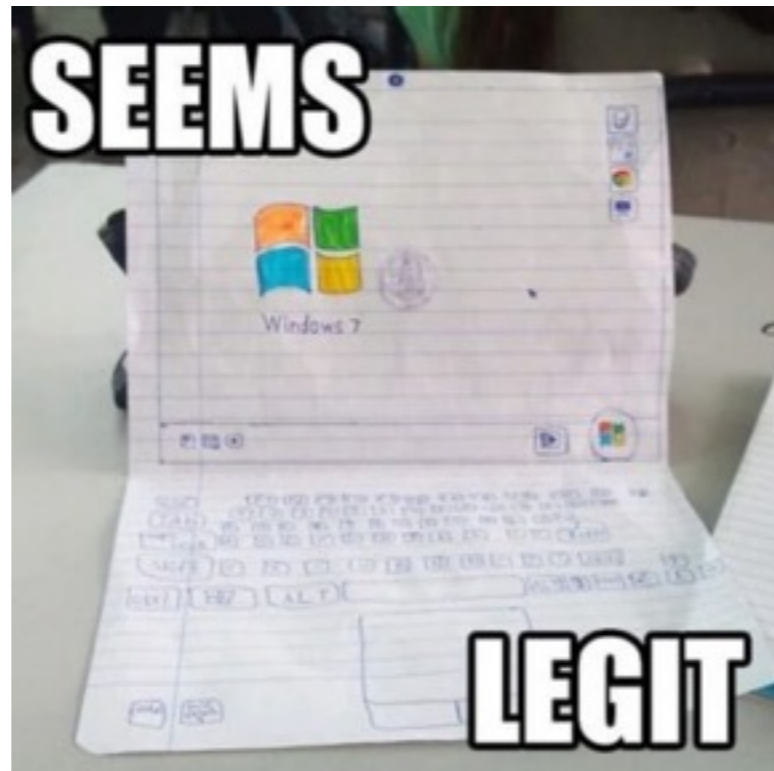
And as a profession, we're not always great at encouraging people to DIY, honestly. ###

Why can it only do *some* magic?

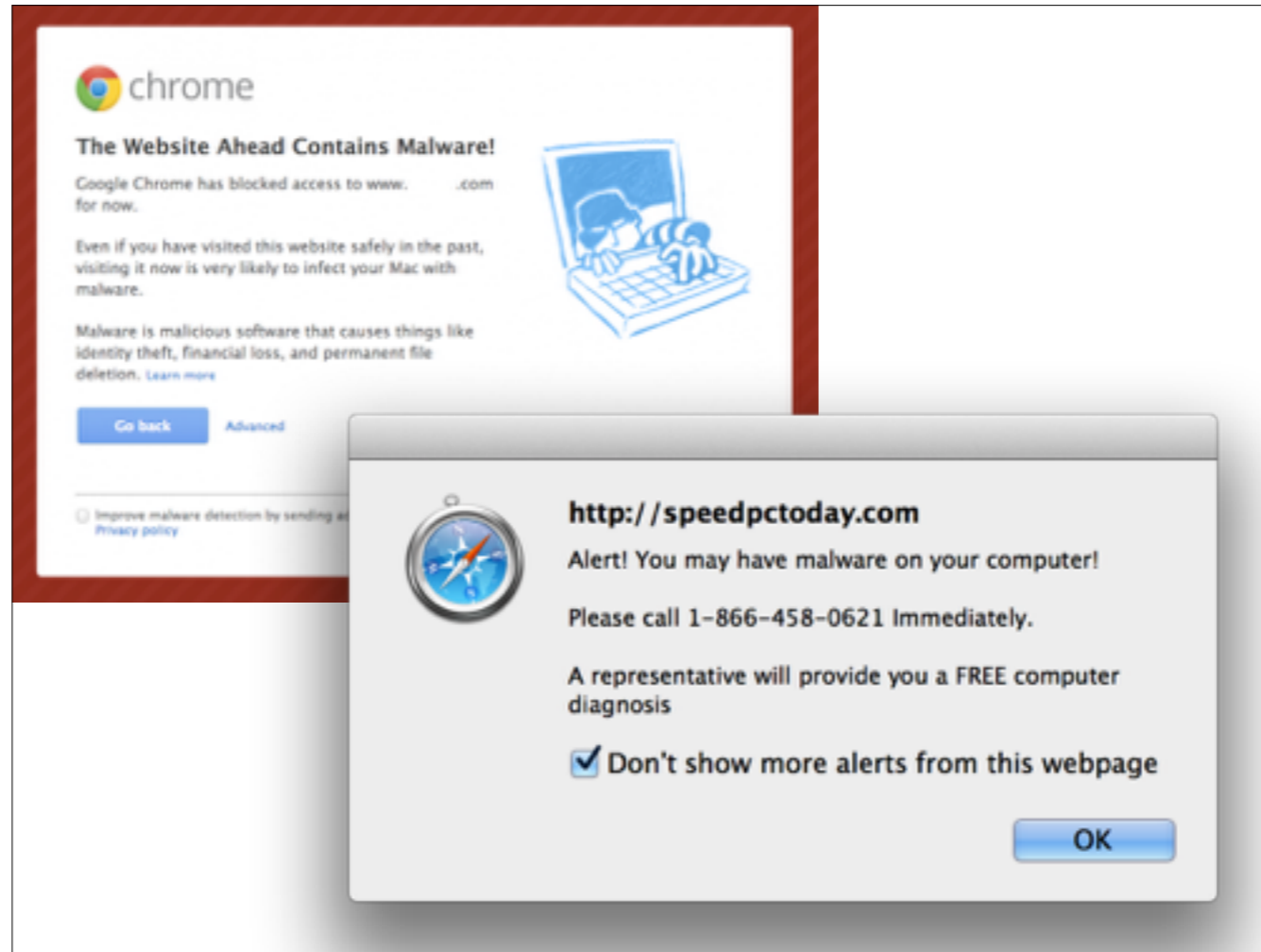


Novice users don't understand why the computer can do some kinds of magic and not other kinds. And so it gets confusing to figure out how it can keep them safe AND make them unsafe. They don't know what they don't know. ###

obvious to us, not to them



This slide is straightforward I think ;) ###



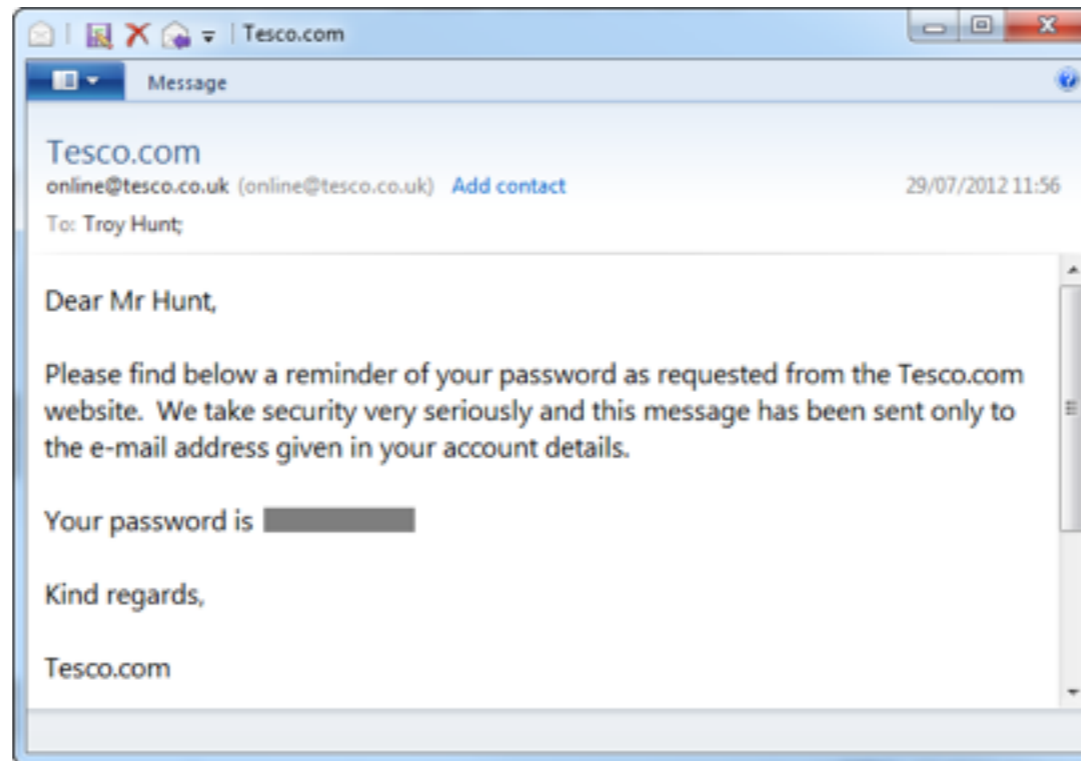
trying to explain to a user why one of these is helpful and one is harmful is challenging. ###

avoiding being scammed



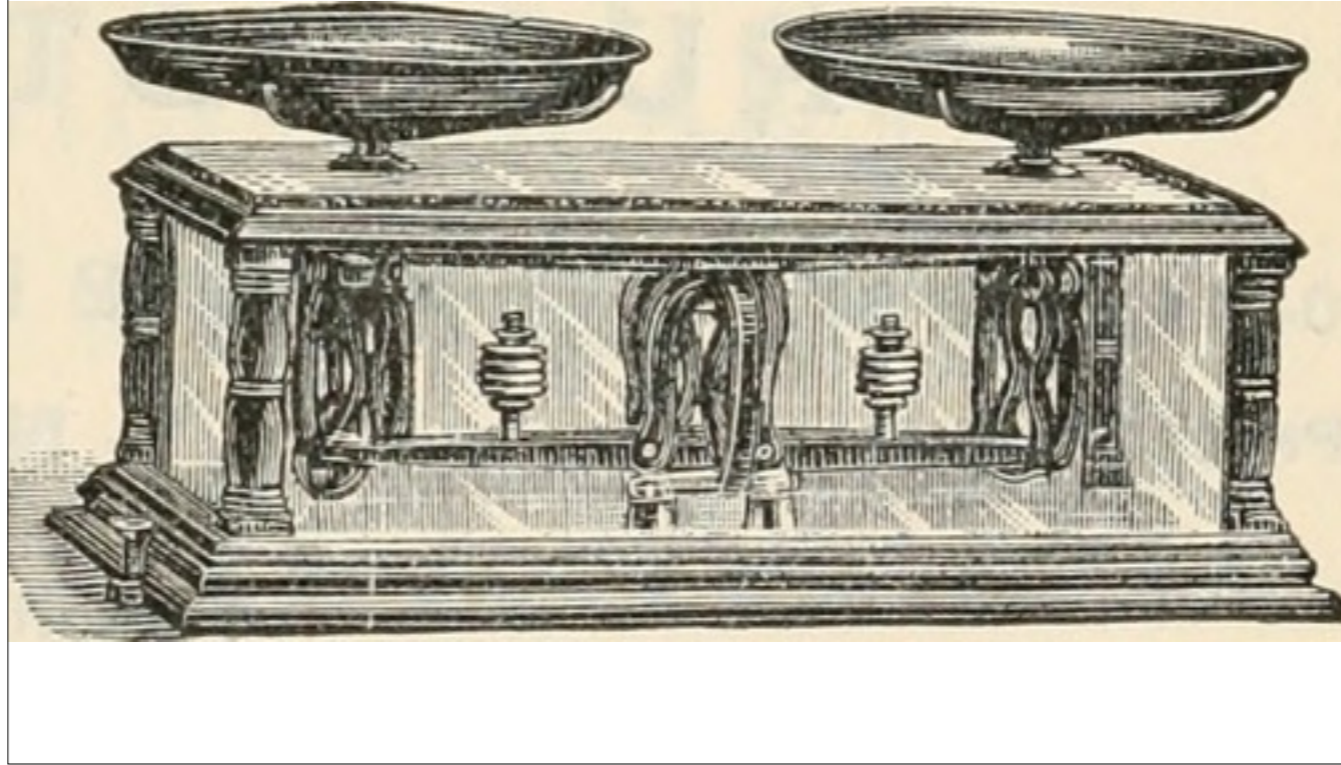
Give them concrete advice. If someone calls and tells you there is something wrong with your computer, they are wrong. Always. ###

never email passwords



If someone asks you to email them your password, never do it (same with credit cards, teach them to hover over links, etc). If they email YOU your password, they are bad at privacy but it's them not you. ###

3. staying updated



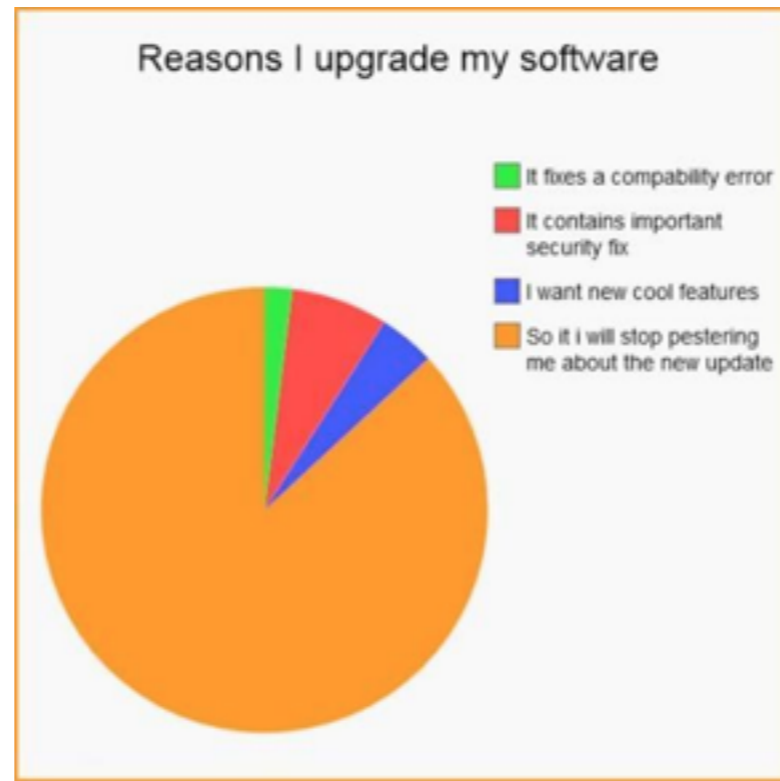
This one has been hard for me. Because I think it should be your right to use whatever ancient creaky computer you are comfortable maintaining. But more and more browsers are warning users that the browser will no longer be secure on older OSes. And older OSes are not getting security updates. ###

do your updates.



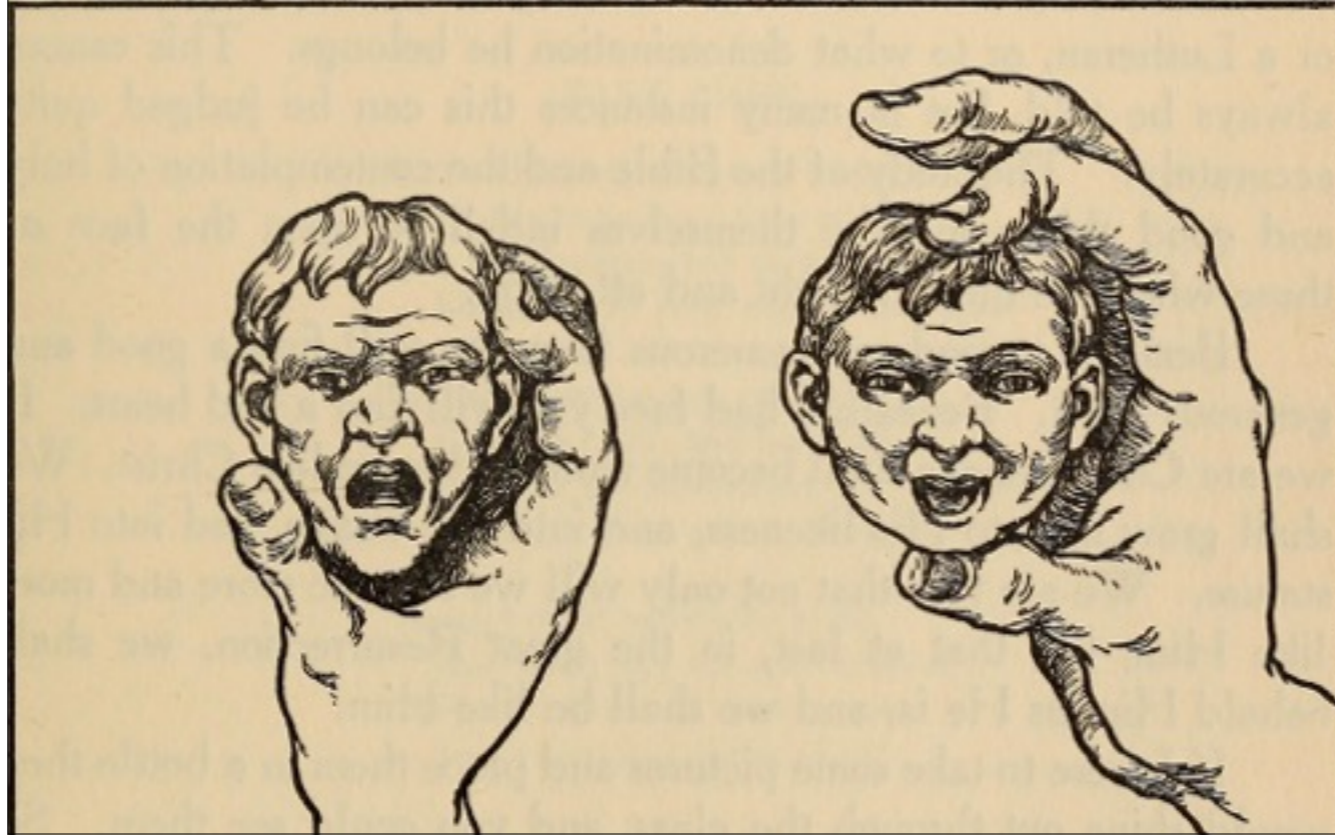
Story time: I taught an ipad class in the spring and one day we had class and I told everyone "Hey we're going to learn about software updates because you all have updates to do..." They looked at me like I was a magician but sure enough they did. Why? Because the Apple Watch had just come out. Explaining the Apple Watch to my neighbors is a bit like trying to explain Uber.... But in short it's Blame California (###)

user concerns are real



And this is where I wrap it up, because so much of this is really messaging and modeling. Sure I mostly update my software to keep from getting nagged (except you Adobe, you can hop in my dock all day) but I need to put my professional hat on when working with novice concerned patrons and explain why this is useful and why it will help them. ###

Reframing the narrative.



I don't want to be all "turn that frown upside down" but just finding better ways to talk about privacy and tech that aren't all as if you were in a bad relationship with it.

###

Attitude upgrades.



Put another way: You don't tell your patrons when you are fighting with your partner, why do you tell them when you are fighting with your computer? ###

A MESSAGE TO OUR LIBRARY USERS

Your Privacy is Important to Us

Our library is committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of our users. Why?

Because we believe that freedom of speech is meaningless without the freedom to read. Confidentiality and privacy are essential to these freedoms, because if library users have to worry about being judged, punished, ostracized, or put under surveillance, they may censor themselves. They may not seek answers to their questions or read the things they want to read, either in print or online. To be free and to govern themselves, people must be able to explore ideas—even controversial ideas—without fear.

If library users aren't doing anything wrong, why should they care about privacy?

There are many reasons why library users might want their privacy and confidentiality protected. Perhaps they have been diagnosed with a disease and want to learn more about it before they tell their children. They may be suffering from domestic or child abuse and want to find out how to get help.

"A popular Government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy; or perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance: And a people who mean to be their own Governors must arm themselves with the power which Knowledge gives."

James Madison
From *James Madison's*
"Advice to My Country"
(1997)

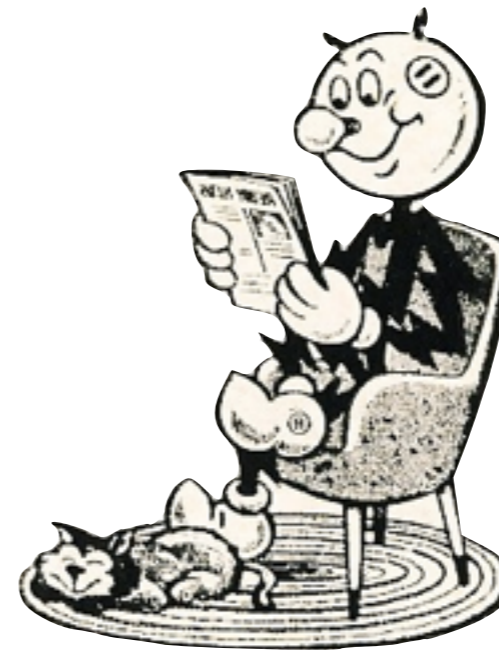
Library patrons in the US have laws protecting their privacy in every state in the US. The more we side with the patron, that we help them with privacy and are not more of the ongoing problem, the more they will trust us to offer solutions to other issues they have as they move forward. ###



librarian.net/talks/privacy

Because really, the internet for me is a lot of good things. It's people to talk to when my town is asleep. It's places to get free photos for my talks. It's a way to keep up with my professional development. It's where I can look for a book in a thousand libraries. And I want to encourage other people to have that be a place where they can do work, learn things and be safe. ###



Thanks! Questions?



Jessamyn West

librarian.net/talks/privacy

jessamyn@gmail.com

 facebook.com/jessamyn
 [@jessamyn](https://twitter.com/jessamyn)