

Life in a glass house

By Taren Urquhart.

Attendees of "Life in a Glass House" were greeted to the lively and passionate presentation from two enthusiastic proponents of privacy, accessibility, and digital sovereignty. Myron Groover, a Vancouver-based Librarian, Vice President of BCLA and chair of the Information Policy Committee, began with an obvious statement — we as information professionals would never allow third party access to our library's patron information. He followed with a question; why then are we teaching our borrowers how to download ebooks using platforms that often lead to information access by third-party interests?

The audience was shown several privacy and protection tools, including AdBlock Plus and Disconnect; both are free and easy to download onto personal and professional internet terminals.

Justin Unrau, a Librarian and co-chair of BCLA's Intellectual Freedom Committee, concluded the session by delving into the murky controversy surrounding ebook digital rights management. Many library professionals, Justin said, question a system that charges four times the price for digital access and then limits the length of its library licenses to a maximum number of loans per e-title.

Audience inquiries included author royalties and why digital content is being treated differently than physical books.

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