Debugging programs on Linux:

An Overview of gdb, idb, Insure++, Valgrind, ccmalloc and mpatrol

Jarno Laitinen (Jarno.Laitinen@cern.ch)

Slides: http://www.lut.fi/u/jt17950/dbg_slides.pdf



Debugging

- Problems occurs especially with C/C++ pointers and memory handling (new, malloc/calloc, free, delete)
- Segmentation fault: exceeding memory area
- But where and when?!

Printf as debugging method

- Simple, no need for tools
- Needs recompiling, inserting lines (where?!) and removing them (in good case)
- Too much stdout is problematic (especially in loops etc.) to follow and slows execution
- Maybe problematic in multithread or process case (logfiles?)
- Often useful to print source code file and line number

```
printf("Thread.c: %d: numThreads: %d\n",__LINE__,numThreads);
```

Compiler options to enable debugging

- Usually recommended to reduce optimisation (to -01 or -00)
- Option -g is needed to show source code by many debuggers (some might not want it)
- gcc: For gdb exists also -ggdb
- pcc: For -g and -ggdb can be set levels 1-3. e.g. "Some debuggers support macro expansion when you use -g3"
- Warnings may help to spot the problem. It seems that icc produces more warnings by default than gcc.
- More gcc warning with -Wall. Also several others e.g. -Wfloat-equal

Reporter.c:723: warning: comparing floating point with == or != is unsa

Common functionality of debuggers

- Run & kill, break & continue the execution
- Breakpoints: to stop on certain line/function (may have condtion)
- Watchpoints: stop if certain variable read or written (variables can be seen on local stack)
- clear & delete, disable & enable temporarily
- Step (to next line) or next (through subroutine) to line (#lines can be given as a parameter)
- Show backtrace of calls when crashed
- Print value or type of an variable or structure
- Some may allow setting value and executing printf

- Some may support (more or less better) POSIX threads (in gdb info threads, thread th_number
- Also running processes may be attached (attach process_id and detach in gdb)
- Special action need to debug child processes tutorial
- info (in gdb) about processes, threads, breakpoints...
- OpenMP (threads) and message passing libraries (MPI, PVM) exists specific debuggers

Usage of idb

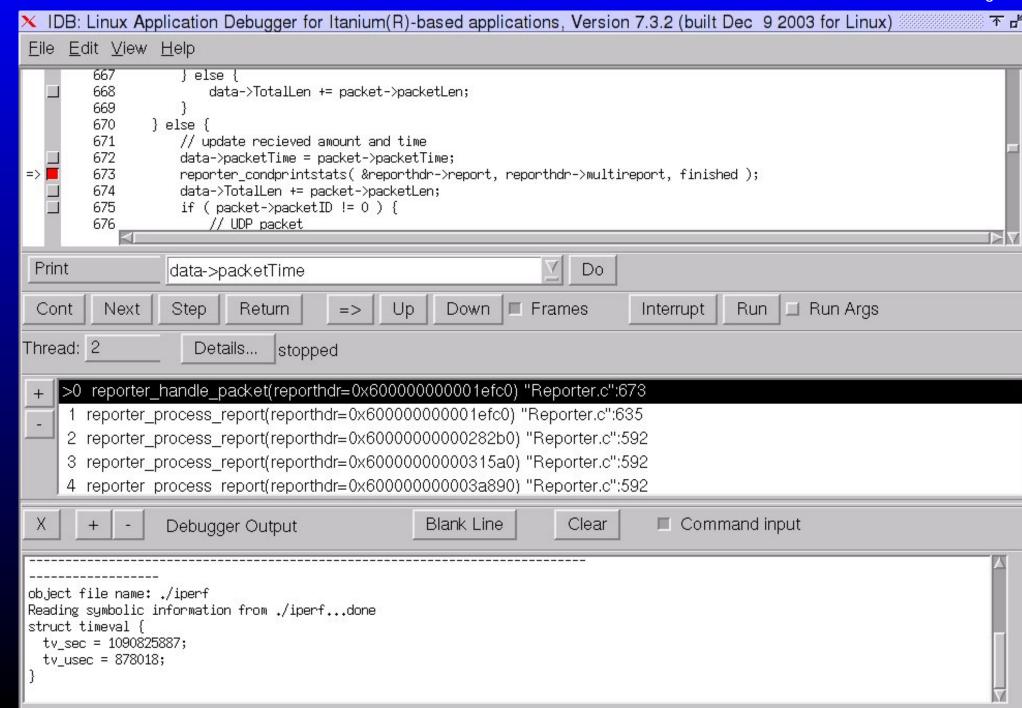
- Documentation on Intel's web site
- A bit different than gdb, can be set to -gdb mode (other mode dbx (Berkeley UNIX symbolic debugger)).
- Include source code files with -I directory
- GUI (-gui) is worth of trying! ddd can use idb too.
- Exists at least in some oplapro (IA-64) machines
- Has limitations as well e.g. does not support new and delete C++ calls

IDB example

```
Thread received signal SEGV stopped at [<opaque> __cfree(...) 0x20000000038b5a0]
```

Information: An <opaque> type was presented during execution of the previous command. For complete type information on this symbol, recompilation of the program will be necessary. Consult the compiler man pages for details on producing full symbol table information using the '-g' (and '-gall' for cxx) flags.

```
(idb) where
>0  0x20000000038b5a0 in __cfree(...) in /lib/tls/libc.so.6.1
#1  0x200000000151480 in /usr/lib/libstdc++.so.5
#2  0x200000000151550 in /usr/lib/libstdc++.so.5
#3  0x4000000000bc90 in Settings_Destroy(mSettings=0x6000000000012ce0)
"Settings.cpp":262
#4  0x400000000003f80 in thread_run_wrapper(paramPtr=<no value>)
"Thread.c":264
#5  0x20000000000288510 in start_thread(...) in /lib/tls/libpthread.so.0
```



GNU debugger (gdb)

- Homepage and docs: http://www.gnu.org/software/gdb/gdb. html
- Many GUIs cgdb (ncurses), ddd (X), kdbg, (KDE, probably best of these) and insight (X)
- Start debugging: gdb [--args] ./executable [arg1]
- Set source file directories dir sub1:sub2
- Starting the execution: run Stopping the execution: kill (quit to exit gdb)
- Help: help [command]
- List code lines: list (params can be file, function, lines or address)
- To see, where it crashed: where or backtrace, which gives list of frames

• To choose frame: frame nmb or up or down. Print vars info locals

- Breakpoints: (temporary (deleted when hit)) tbreak and non-temporary:
 break. Both takes as a parameter function name or line number
- Priting variable: print variable
- Setting varible: set variable=3
- Possibly to monitor (watch) a variable (read, write, condition)

Has problems with multiple threads (NPTL library)

321

* reading register r1 (#1): No such process. Or

```
★ Cannot find thread 655401: no thread to satisfy query
  ★ Probably using back port setenv LD_ASSUME_KERNEL 2.4.1 works
    better
Program received signal SIGSEGV, Segmentation fault.
[Switching to Thread 65541 (LWP 2447)]
0x0804fbf1 in ReportPacket (agent=0xd156728, packet=0x805bab8)
   at Reporter.c:321
321
               int index = agent->reporterindex;
Current language: auto; currently c
(qdb) list ReportPacket
        * the arrival or departure of a "packet" (for TCP it
314
315
        * will actually represent many packets). This needs to
316
        * be as simple and fast as possible as it gets called for
        * every "packet".
317
318
        * /
    void ReportPacket( ReportHeader* agent, ReportStruct *packet ) {
319
320
           if ( agent != NULL ) {
```

int index = agent->reporterindex;

```
322
323
                 * First find the appropriate place to put the
information
(qdb) print index
$1 = 1074857152
(qdb) whatis agent->reporterindex
type = int
(qdb) print agent->reporterindex
Cannot access memory at address 0xd156728
(qdb) break ReportPacket
Breakpoint 1 at 0x804fbe4: file Reporter.c, line 320.
(qdb) run
The program being debugged has been started already.
Start it from the beginning? (y or n) y
Breakpoint 1, ReportPacket (agent=0x8083d28, packet=0x8083d08)
    at Reporter.c:320
         if ( agent != NULL ) {
320
```

```
(qdb) next
                int index = agent->reporterindex;
321
(qdb) print agent->reporterindex
$3 = 699
(qdb) clear ReportPacket
Deleted breakpoints 2 1
(qdb) continue
Program received signal SIGSEGV, Segmentation fault.
[Switching to Thread 65541 (LWP 2542)]
0x401d114c in memcpy () from /lib/libc.so.6
(qdb) where
   0x401d114c in memcpy () from /lib/libc.so.6
#0
\#1 0x0804fc67 in ReportPacket (agent=0x805baf8, packet=0x805c000)
    at Reporter.c:341
   0x0804b8e7 in Server::Run() (this=0x805baf8) at Server.cpp:122
#2
#3 0x0804a243 in server spawn (thread=0x805c000) at Launch.cpp:85
#4
   0x08049c7f in thread run wrapper (paramPtr=0x805c000) at
Thread.c:216
   0x40109c40 in pthread start thread event () from
#5
```

/lib/libpthread.so.0

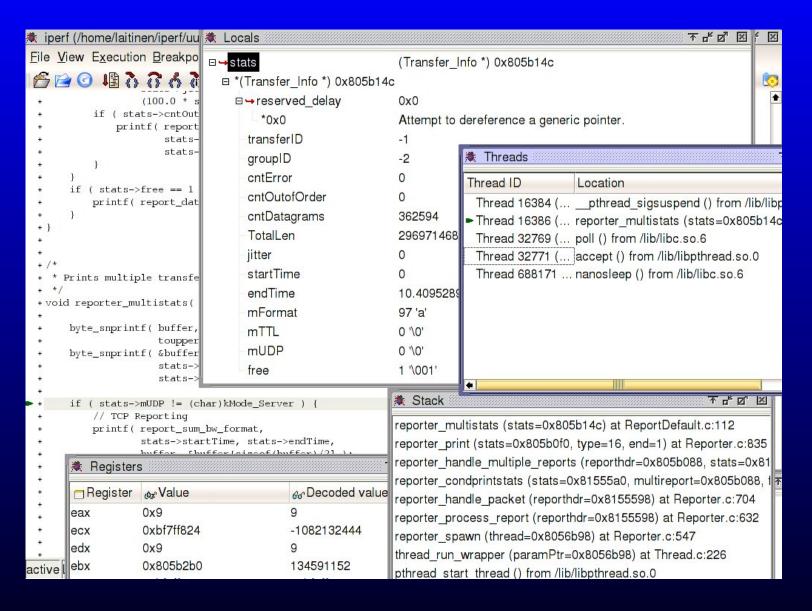


Figure 2: kdbg: A nice user interface for gdb

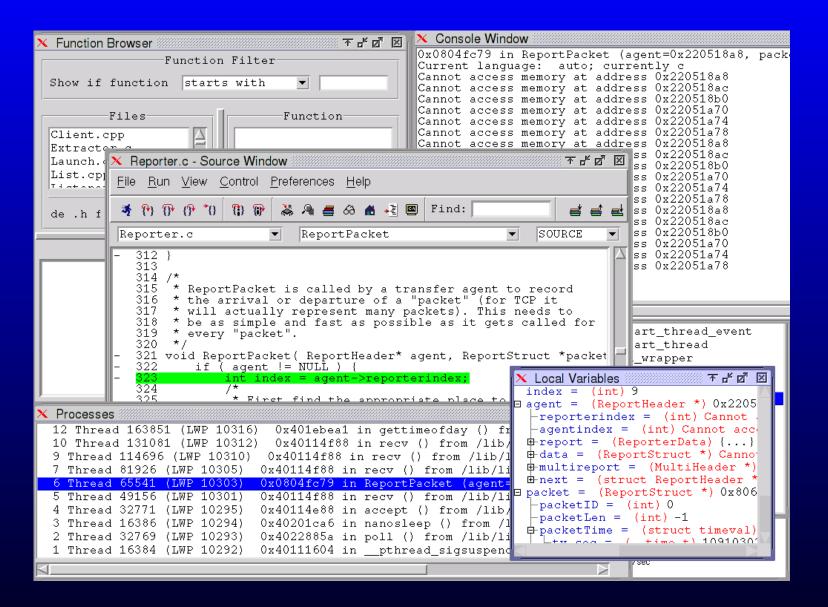


Figure 3: Insight: Yet another GUI for gdb. A bit nicer than ddd.

Post-mortem analysis of a core dump

- No need to run in debugger
- To get core dump when segfaulting, ulimit -c none (may be a big)

```
(qdb) core core.23257
Core was generated by './iperf -s'.
Program terminated with signal 11, Segmentation fault.
Reading symbols from /usr/lib/libstdc++.so.5...done.
Loaded symbols for /usr/lib/libstdc++.so.5
(qdb) backtrace
   0x20000000038ddd0 in int free () from /lib/tls/libc.so.6.1
   0x20000000038b620 in free () from /lib/tls/libc.so.6.1
#1
   0x200000000151480 in operator delete(void*) ()
 from /usr/lib/libstdc++.so.5
(mSettings=0x600000000001bc80) at Settings.cpp:266
```

Valgrind

- GPL licensed: http://valgrind.kde.org/
- Support NPTL threads, but not IA-64
- Takes binary file, written in any language, as a parameter
- Can start debugger on errorneous point (–db-attach=yes)
- Logfile: --log-file=something
- Couple projects to create GUI (Gnome/Kde devel needed)
- Also profiler projects (picture from kcachegrind)

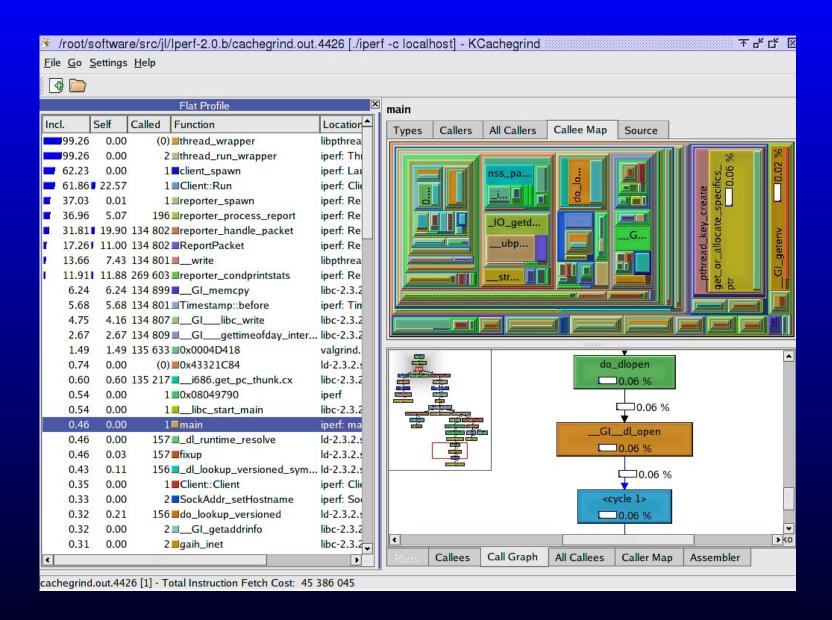


Figure 4: kcachegrind

- Valgrind core can be extended with plugins (–tool)
 - ★ memcheck: To detect memory-management problems (C/C++) use of uninitialised mem, R/W freed memory or inappropriate places, memory leaks, mismatched allocation and frees (C vs. C++), passing uninitialised/unaddressible mem to syscalls and misuse of some POSIX theads

```
==9112== Thread 2:
==9112== Invalid read of size 8
==9112==
           at 0x8050782: reporter handle multiple reports
(Reporter.c:716)
==9112==
           by 0x8050AAF: reporter condprintstats (Reporter.c:781)
==9112== Thread 2:
==9112== Invalid read of size 4
==9112==
           at 0x80508CF: reporter handle multiple reports
(Reporter.c:741)
==9112== by 0x8050AAF: reporter_condprintstats (Reporter.c:781)
==9112== by 0x805071A: reporter_handle_packet (Reporter.c:702)
==9112==
           by 0x80504E7: reporter_process_report (Reporter.c:630)
         Address 0x1BB69FD4 is not stack'd, malloc'd or (recently)
==9112==
free'd
```

```
==9112== Address 0x1BB69FE4 is 12 bytes before a block of size 152 free'd
==9112== at 0x1B904249: free (vg_replace_malloc.c:153)
==9112== by 0x1B9FC880: my_free (vg_libpthread.c:346)
==9112== by 0x1B9FD830: thread_wrapper (vg_libpthread.c:850)
==9112== by 0xB000F6A8: do_quit (vg_scheduler.c:1861)

==9112== ERROR SUMMARY: 259 errors from 26 contexts (suppressed: 21:1)
==9112== malloc/free: in use at exit: 10644 bytes in 10 blocks.
==9112== malloc/free: 85 allocs, 75 frees, 273392 bytes allocated
```

- * addrcheck: Checks fewer errors Memcheck (faster, less mem needed)
- * cachegrind: Aims to point cache misses in code. Gives amount of cache misses, memory references and instructions per line/function/programs

```
==9142== I refs: 19,709,481

==9142== I1 misses: 13,196

==9142== L2i miss rate: 0.6%

==9142== L2i miss rate: 0.1%

==9142== = ==9142== D refs: 13,011,762 (8,491,314 rd + 4,520,448 wr)
```

```
==9142== D1 misses: 290,854 ( 116,930 rd + 173,924 wr)
==9142== L2d misses: 15,739 ( 8,875 rd + 6,864 wr)
==9142== D1 miss rate: 2.2% ( 1.3% + 3.8% )
==9142== L2d miss rate: 0.1% ( 0.1% + 0.1% )
==9142==
==9142== L2 refs: 304,050 ( 130,126 rd + 173,924 wr)
==9142== L2 misses: 19,025 ( 12,161 rd + 6,864 wr)
==9142== L2 miss rate: 0.0% ( 0.0% + 0.1% )
```

massif: Profiles program's heap. Produces graphs of usage over time and places where most memory was allocated

```
==24753== Total spacetime: 5,465,480,517 ms.B

==24753== heap: 96.0%

==24753== heap admin: 0.2%

==24753== stack(s): 3.6%
```

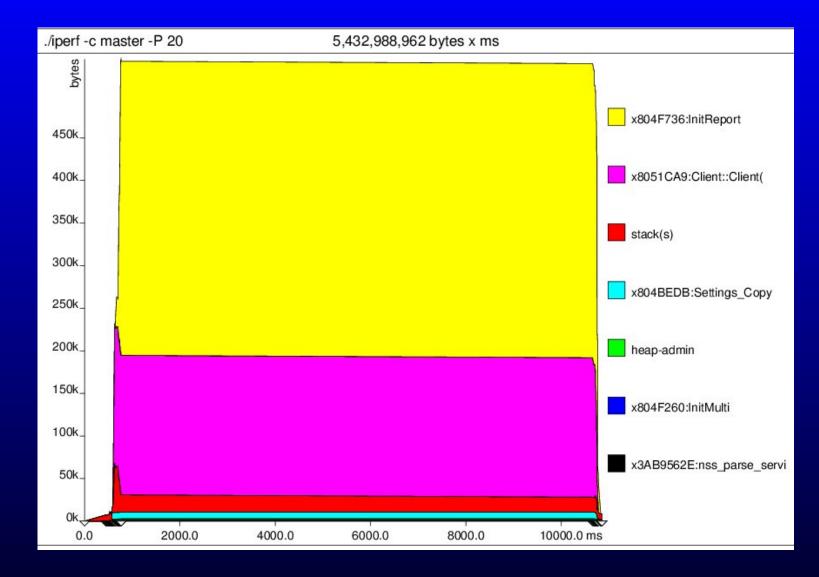


Figure 5: A graph from Valgrind's massif heap profiler

⋆ helgrind: detects data races for C/C++ Pthreads. Experimental.

==9322== Thread 2:

==9322== Possible data race reading variable at 0x805720C (ReportRoometer) at 0x8050228: reporter_spawn (Reporter.c:543)

Insure++

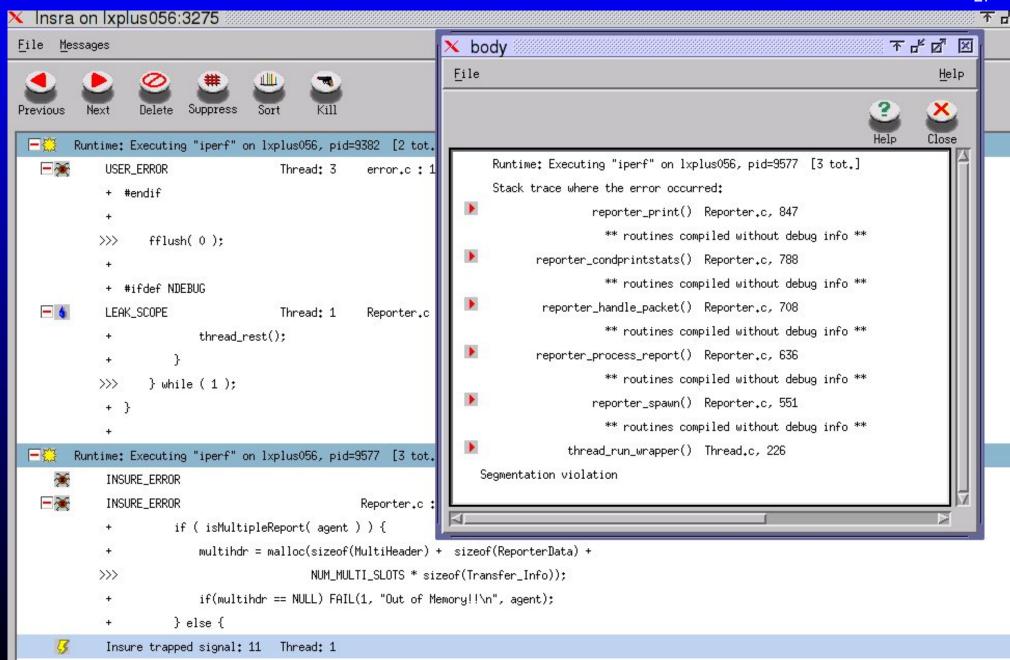
- Memory corruption/leak check on runtime for C/C++ codes
- Commercial product of Panasoft http://www.parasoft.com/jsp/products/screenshows
- Expensive (1 year license \$15k), but CERN has five floating lic.
- Should be more advanced than mpatrol or Valgrind

To use CERN's Insure++

Instructions and license usage:

```
http://product-support.web.cern.ch/product-support/sdt/insthtml
```

- Works at least in lxplus machines (remember ssh -x)
- Copy to your dir insure.csh (.sh) from /afs/cern.ch/pttools/Insure/insure/linux/
- Correct: setenv INSURE /afs/cern.ch/pttools/Insure/insure/ (official instruction creates symlinks)
- Run: source insure.csh (or ./insure.sh) (sets the PATH)
- Use insure instead of your compiler
- Execute program as usual. Messages appears for eache process to gui, where user can browse them through and dive to source code (from vi editor, get out with shift+zz)

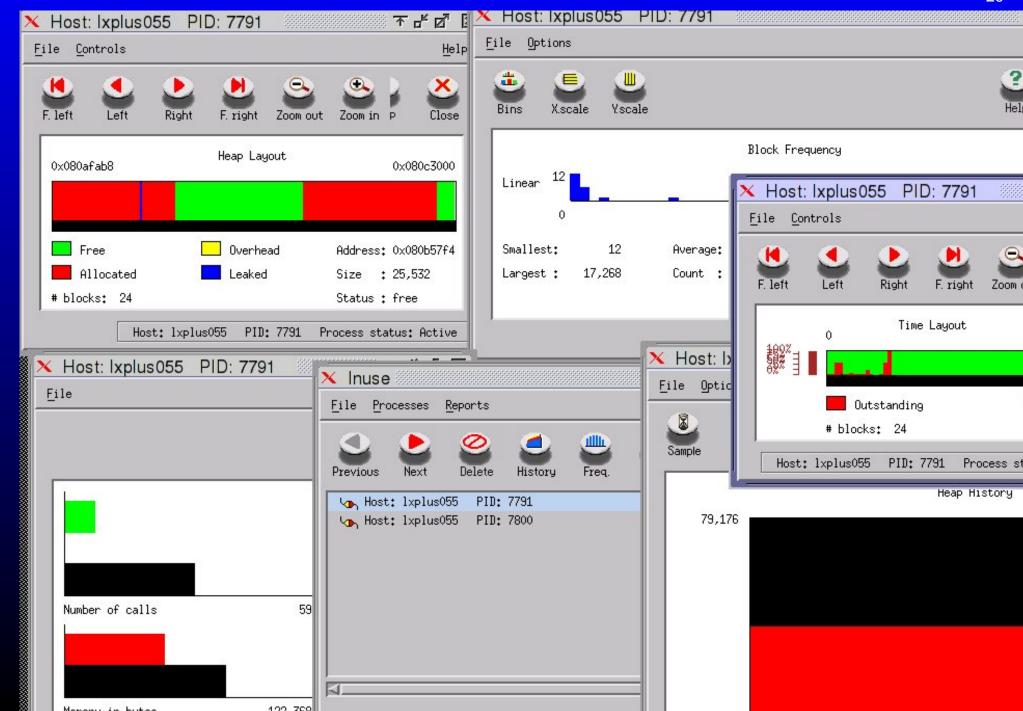


Inuse

In the same directory as Insure++

Inuse shows charts of memory usage (when, how much)

and memory leaks



ccmalloc

- GPL licensed. "Swiss made" http://www.inf.ethz.ch/personal/ biere/projects/ccmalloc/
- Notices at least access to freed data, but not all illegal reads.
- Replace compiler with ccmalloc and include couple libraries in linking. Configurations made to file .ccmalloc (template included).

```
retrieving function names for addresses ... done.
 reading file info from qdb ... done.
 sorting by number of not reclaimed bytes ... done.
 number of call chains: 6
 number of ignored call chains: 0
 number of reported call chains: 6
 number of internal call chains: 6
 number of library call chains: 0
* 44.6% = 8192 Bytes of garbage allocated in 1 allocation
           +0x0808d34c
                0x????????? in <???>
                0x4023469a in <clone>
                0x40111e51 in <pthread_start_thread>
                0x0804a3b0 in <thread_run_wrapper>
```

mpatrol

- Mpatrol http://www.cbmamiga.demon.co.uk/mpatrol/
- Not so easy to use as Valgrind, but quite near to it. Manual 264 pages.
- Has plenty of options. Long list of features.
- mpatrol.h must be included to source file before others to instrument it or to use --dynamic switch
- Should support threads and work in multiple operation systems (originally Amiga project)
- Can produce some kind of profile data also (last three below) (apparently I had problems to tell source code files)

```
0x0804A287 client_spawn+123
        0x08049C91 thread_run_wrapper+103
        0x4014FE51 ???
        0x4027269A ???
    call stack
        0x401C4658 ???
        0x4002E87E ???
        0x4003C328 ???
        0x4004025A ???
        0x400F748E ???
        0x08052286 _ZN6Client3RunEv+394
        0x0804A287 client spawn+123
        0x08049C91 thread run wrapper+103
        0x4014FE51 ???
        0x4027269A ???
allocation count:
                   472
allocation peak:
                   257 (1047793 bytes)
allocation limit: 0 bytes
allocated blocks:
                   259 (1047841 bytes)
marked blocks:
                   0 (0 bytes)
freed blocks:
                   0 (0 bytes)
free blocks:
                   70 (103 bytes)
internal blocks:
                   8 (131072 bytes)
total heap usage:
                  1183744 bytes
total compared:
                   164 bytes
total located:
                   636 bytes
total copied:
                   33643 bytes
total set:
                   31056 bytes
total warnings:
                   0
total errors:
```

. . .

ALLOCATION BINS

(number of bins: 1024)

		alloca	ated	unfreed						
size	count	%	bytes bytes	%	count	%	bytes bytes	%		
4	2	0.20	8	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00		
5	3	0.29	15	0.01	0	0.00	0	0.00		

. . .

MEMORY LEAKS

(maximum stack depth: 1)

	u	nfreed		allocat			
%	bytes	%	count	%	bytes	count	function
83.76	1712	100.00	12	100.00	1712	12	0x40122781
9.20	188	35.01	1	33.33	537	3	0x401219EA

DIRECT ALLOCATIONS

$$(0 < s \le 32 < m \le 256 < 1 \le 2048 < x)$$

	allocated					unireed								
_														
	bytes	%	ន	m	1	х	bytes	%	ន	m	1	х	count	function
	73856	37.27				37	0	0.00					7	_objalloc_alloc

36

 72448
 36.56
 37
 0
 0.00
 283
 0x080593C1

 23736
 11.98
 .
 1 11
 0
 0.00
 4
 bfd_malloc

. . .

The backup slide..

- Also debuggers get stuck quite often
- If Ctrl+C does not help. Try Ctrl+Z and kill %1
- To see running prosesses ps -aux
- to kill them kill [-9] process_id
- or killall [-9] process_name