

# Eclipse Memory Analyzer Tool (MAT)

**Sang Shin**

**JPassion.com**

**“Learn with Passion!”**





# Topics

- Basic concepts
  - > Heap dump
  - > Shallow vs. Retained heap
  - > Dominator tree
  - > GC (Garbage Collection) Roots
  - > Incoming & outgoing references
  - > Accumulation point
- How to detect memory leak
- Class loader memory leak example



# Heapdump



# What is a Heap Dump?

- A heap dump is a snapshot of the memory of a Java process at a certain moment of time
- Heap dump format
  - > HPROF binary format (most common)
  - > IBM system dumps (after pre-processing them)
  - > IBM portable heap dumps (PHD)
- Usually a full GC is triggered before the heap dump is written so it contains information about the remaining objects



# What Does a HeapDump Contain?

- All Objects
  - > Class, field, primitive values and references
- All Classes
  - > Classloader, name, super class, static fields
- Thread stacks and local variables
  - > The call-stacks of threads at the moment of the snapshot, and per-frame information about local objects
- Garbage Collection(GC) roots



# A Heap Dump Does NOT Tell You..

- Where an object was allocated
- When an object was created
- How many objects were garbage collected
- It is indeed just a snapshot



# A Heap Dump Can Help You

- Analyze the reason for an *OutOfMemoryError*
- Analyze the memory footprint of an application
- Debug non-memory related problems too
  - > Why an application is non-responsive? (Through threads analysis)



# How to Get a Heap Dump

- You can trigger a heap dump (on-demand heap dumping)
  - > Within a tool (jconsole, Eclipse Memory Analyzer, NetBeans, Eclipse, JMC, etc)
  - > `jmap -dump:format=b,file=<filename.hprof> <pid>`
- Application started with following JVM option creates a Heap dump when `OutOfMemoryError` occurs
  - > `-XX:+HeapDumpOnOutOfMemoryError`
  - > There is no negative performance impact on the VM
- Application started with following JVM option creates a Heap dump when `CTRL+BREAK` is pressed
  - > `-XX:+HeapDumpOnCtrlBreak`



# How to Get a “Good” Heap Dump

- When memory is exhausted, the leak will occupy the most of the heap space
- Ensure big enough heap space, this will make the leak easier to find
  - > The memory leak pattern looks more obvious



# Lab:

## Exercise 1: Acquiring a Heapdump 5117\_memory\_mat.zip





# **Shallow Heap vs. Retained Heap**

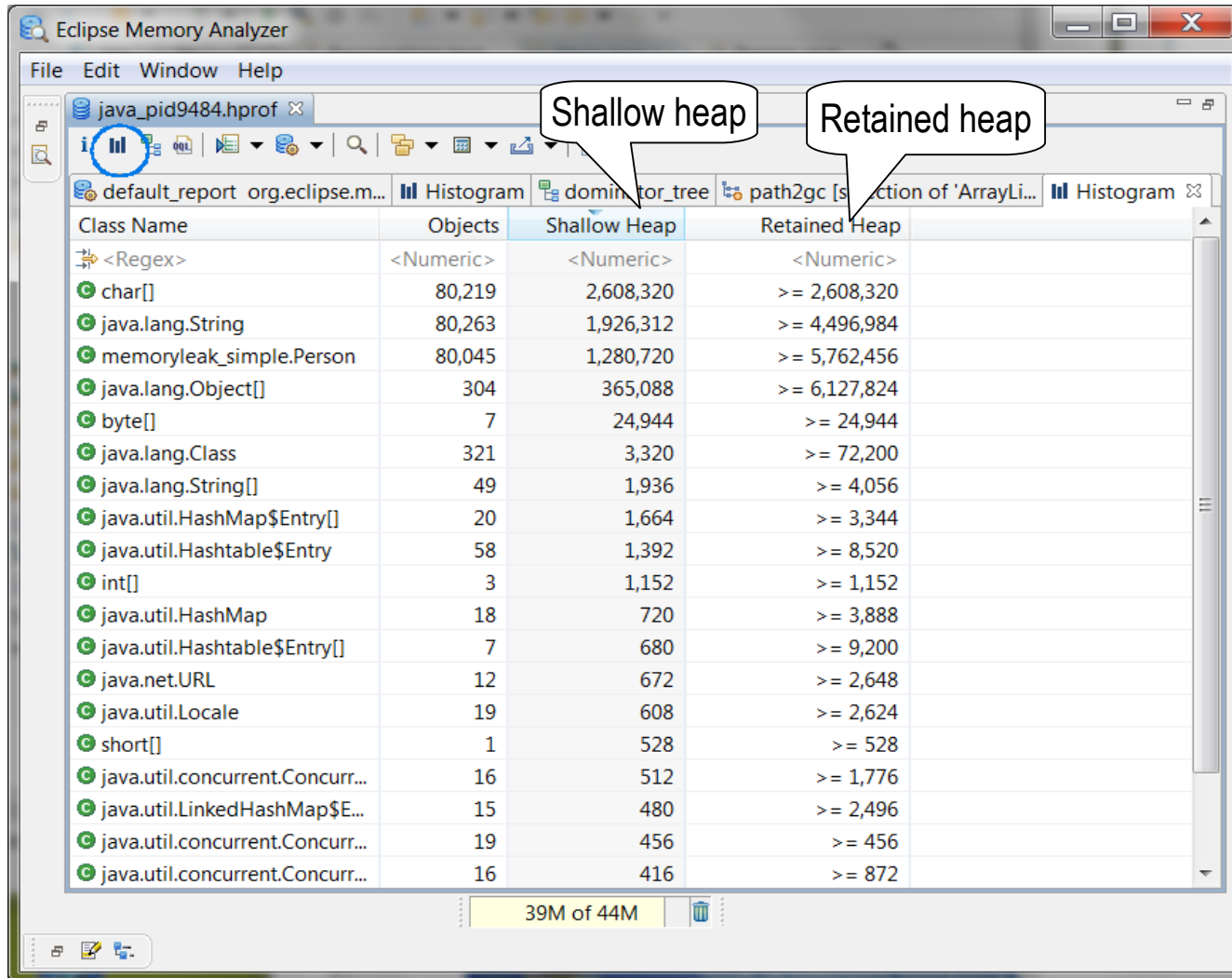


# Shallow Heap vs. Retained Heap

- Shallow heap is the memory consumed by one object
  - > Its size in the heap
  - > An object needs 32 or 64 bits (depending on the OS architecture) per reference, 4 bytes per Integer, 8 bytes per Long, etc.
  - > Depending on the heap dump format, the size may be adjusted (e.g. aligned to 8, etc...) to model better the real consumption of the VM
- Retained set of X is the set of objects which would be removed by GC when X is GC'ed
  - > Retained heap of X is the sum of shallow sizes of all objects in the retained set of X, i.e. memory kept alive by X
  - > Amount of heap memory that will be freed when X is garbage collected



# Shallow Heap vs. Retained Heap



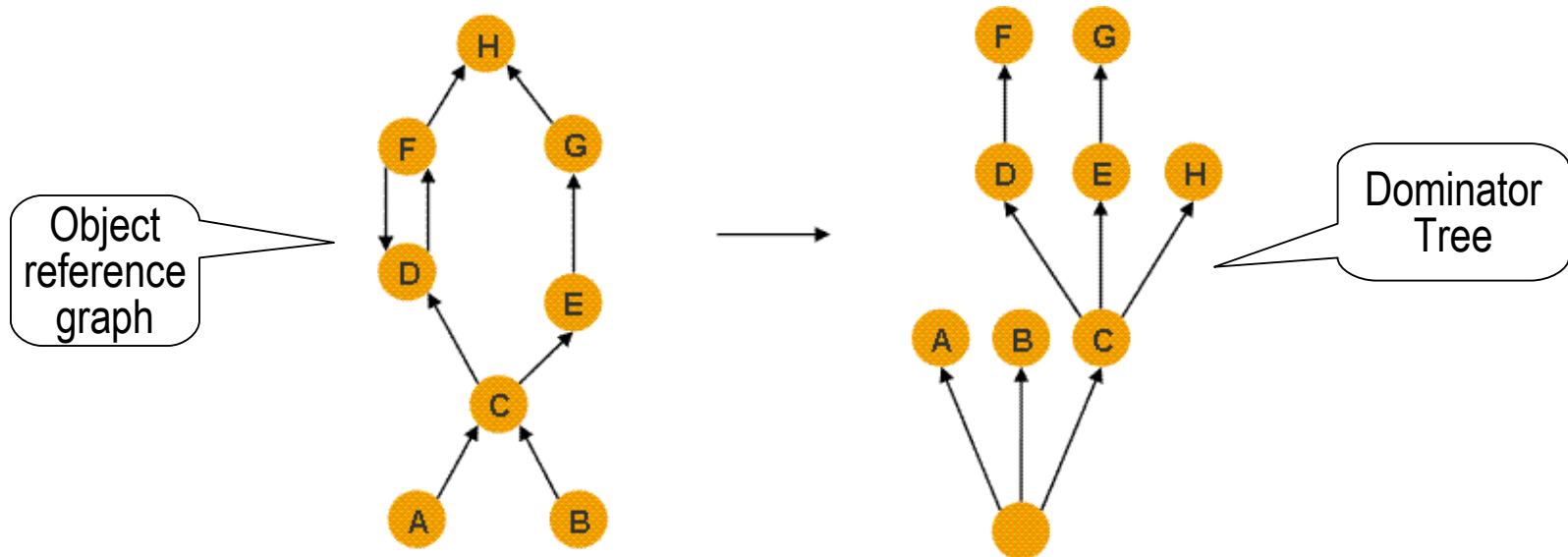


# Dominator Tree



# What is and Why Dominator Tree?

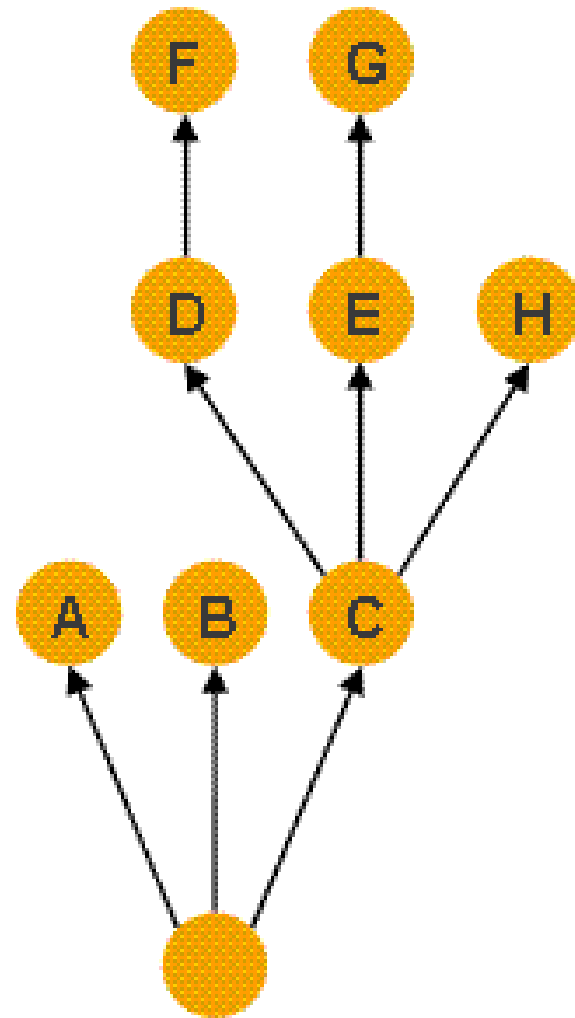
- A dominator tree is built out of the object graph.
- The transformation of the “Object reference graph” into a “Dominator tree” allows you to easily identify the biggest chunks of “retained memory” and the keep-alive dependencies among objects.





# Objects in Dominator Tree

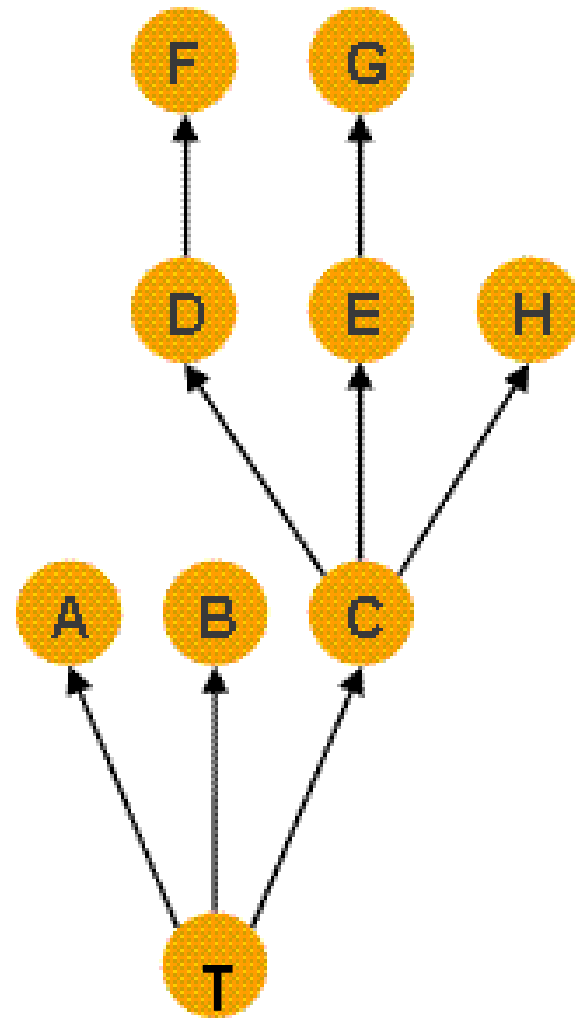
- Each object is the immediate dominator of its children, so dependencies between the objects are easily identified.
- An object  $x$  dominates an object  $y$  if every path in the object graph from the start (or the root) node to  $y$  must go through  $x$
- “C” is immediate dominator of “D”, “E”, and “H”
- “C” is dominator of “D”, “E”, “H”, “F”, “G”





# Dominator Tree & Retained Set & Heap

- The objects belonging to the sub-tree of  $x$  (i.e. the objects dominated by  $x$ ) represent the retained set of  $x$
- If “C” is GC'ed, then all the retained heap space of it will be also GC'ed
- The retained heap space of “C” equals the collection of all shallow heap spaces of its children - “D”, “E”, “H”, “F”, “G”





# **GC (Garbage Collection) Roots**



# What is & Why Garbage Collection Roots?

- A Garbage Collection root (GC root) is an object that is accessible from outside the heap
  - > They are root owner (root dominator) of other objects in the heap
- The *Find Nearest GC Root* feature can help you track down memory leaks by showing the owner chain of the references that prevents an object from being garbage collected.
- Example scenarios where an object is a GC root:
  - > Thread – A started, but not stopped, thread
  - > System class - Class loaded by bootstrap/system class loader. For example, everything from the rt.jar like java.util.\*
  - > ...



# Path to GC Root

The screenshot shows the Eclipse Memory Analyzer interface. The 'dominator\_tree' view is active, displaying a list of objects and their memory usage. The 'java.util.ArrayList' object is selected, and a context menu is open over it. The 'Path To GC Roots' option is highlighted in the menu. A secondary menu is also open, showing various options for displaying the path to the GC root.

Class Name	Shallo...	Retained Heap	Percentage
<Regex>	<Nume...	<Numeric>	<Numeric>
java.lang.Thread @ 0x280379e0 main Thread	104	6,115,888	98.22%
java.util.ArrayList @ 0x280379e0	24	6,115,512	98.21%
java.lang.ThreadLocal\$ThreadLocal			0.00%
java.lang.String @ 0x27ffffe0			0.00%
char[4] @ 0x28039b68 main			
java.security.AccessControlCor			
java.lang.Object @ 0x28039bb			
Σ Total: 6 entries			
class java.lang.System @ 0x2d30...			
char[8192] @ 0x28003e88 80045			
class java.nio.charset.Charset @ 0			
sun.nio.cs.StreamEncoder @ 0x28			
sun.misc.Launcher\$AppClassLoader			
class java.io.File @ 0x2d30caf0 S			
char[1340] @ 0x2800c390 C:\Jav			
class java.util.Locale @ 0x2d30f7			
class java.lang.ClassLoader @ 0x2d309500 System Class	32	1,592	0.03%
class sun.nio.cs.StandardCharsets @ 0x2d30dd50 System Class	152	1,512	0.02%
class java.lang.CharacterDataLatin1 @ 0x2d30fc70 System Class	16	1,072	0.02%
class sun.misc.MetaIndex @ 0x2d30f550 System Class	8	976	0.02%

Find paths to garbage...from a single object. 38M of 44M



# **Other Misc. Concepts**



# Incoming & Outgoing References

- Outgoing references
  - > Show what objects the current object is making references to
- Incoming references
  - > Shows what objects are making references to the current object
  - > Starts from GC Root



# Incoming References

The screenshot shows the Eclipse Memory Analyzer interface. The main table displays memory usage for various classes. The class `memoryleak_simple.Person` is selected, and a context menu is open over it. The menu options include 'List objects', 'Show objects by class', 'Merge Shortest Paths to GC Roots', 'Java Basics', 'Java Collections', 'Leak Identification', 'Immediate Dominators', 'Show Retained Set', 'Copy', 'Search Queries...', 'Calculate Minimum Retained Size (quick approx.)', 'Calculate Precise Retained Size', and 'Columns...'. The 'List objects' option is highlighted, and a sub-menu is open showing 'with outgoing references' and 'with incoming references', with the latter being highlighted by a blue circle.

Class Name	Objects	Shallow Heap	Retained Heap
<Regex>	<Numeric>	<Numeric>	<Numeric>
char[]	80,219	2,608,320	>= 2,608,320
java.lang.String	80,263	1,926,312	>= 4,496,984
memoryleak_simple.Person	80,045	1,280,720	>= 5,762,456
java.lang.Object[]			
byte[]			
java.lang.Class			
java.lang.String[]			
java.util.HashMap\$Entry[]			
java.util.Hashtable\$Entry			
int[]			
java.util.HashMap			
java.util.Hashtable\$Entry[]			
java.net.URL			
java.util.Locale			
short[]			
java.util.concurrent.ConcurrentHashMap\$Entry[]	15	480	>= 2,496
java.util.concurrent.ConcurrentHashMap\$Entry[]	19	456	>= 456
java.util.concurrent.ConcurrentHashMap\$Entry[]	16	416	>= 872

List the selected objects. 38M of 44M



# Accumulation Point

- Shows significant drop in the retained size – good candidate where memory leak starts to occur

## Report Details

### Shortest Paths To the Accumulation Point ▾

Class Name	Shallow Heap	Retained Heap
java.lang.Object[768] @ 0x49645a0	3,008	53,487,248
queue java.util.PriorityQueue @ 0x3a703b8	24	53,487,272
events org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.LeakingQueue @ 0x3a703a8	16	53,487,288
eventQueue org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.LeakQueueProcessor @ 0x3a703d0 LeakQueue Processor Thread Thread	96	140,560
lq class org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.AnotherClassReferencingTheQueue @ 0x7a216d0	8	8
Total: 2 entries		

The chain of objects and references which keep the suspect alive

### Accumulated Objects ▾

Class name	Shallow Heap	Retained Heap	Percentage
org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.LeakingQueue @ 0x3a703a8	16	53,487,288	80,18%
java.util.PriorityQueue @ 0x3a703b8	24	53,487,272	80,18%
java.lang.Object[768] @ 0x49645a0	3,008	53,487,248	80,16%
org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.LeakEventImpl @ 0x2ada618	16	74,080	0,11%
org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.AnotherLeakEventImpl @ 0x2ada640	16	74,080	0,11%
org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.LeakEventImpl @ 0x2ada668	16	74,080	0,11%
org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.AnotherLeakEventImpl @ 0x2ada690	16	74,080	0,11%
org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.LeakEventImpl @ 0x2ada6b8	16	74,080	0,11%
org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.AnotherLeakEventImpl @ 0x2ada6e0	16	74,080	0,11%
org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.LeakEventImpl @ 0x2ada708	16	74,080	0,11%
org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.AnotherLeakEventImpl @ 0x2ada730	16	74,080	0,11%

A significant drop in the retained sizes shows the accumulation point

Accumulated objects



# **How to Analyze a Heapdump? (How to find Memory Leak?)**



# Schemes of Analyzing Heap Dump

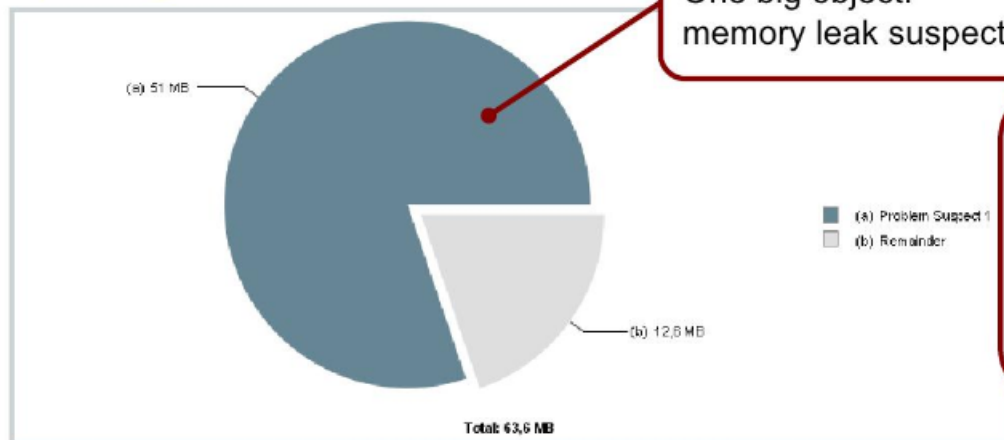
- Find the biggest objects
  - > Good starting point
- Analyze why they are kept in memory
  - > Someone has a reference to the objects
  - > Incoming references, GC Root
- Analyze what makes them big
  - > Check retained heap
  - > Accumulation point

Memory Analyzer performs the above and suggests “Problem Suspect”



# One Big Object, Problem Suspect

## Report Overview



One big object:  
memory leak suspect

Any up-to-date architecture loads components with separate class loaders, be it OSGi or JEE application servers. Extensible to display meaningful names.

### Problem Suspect 1

One instance of "org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.LeakingQueue" loaded by "org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak" occupies 53.487.288 (80,16%) bytes. The memory is accumulated in one instance of "java.lang.Object[]" loaded by "<system class loader>".

#### Keywords

java.lang.Object[]  
org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.LeakingQueue  
org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak

#### CSN Components

SOME-COMPONENT for "org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak"

[Details »](#)

Search by keywords:  
identify if problem is  
known

Classification for trouble  
ticket system: less ping-  
pong of trouble tickets.



# Chain of Incoming References, Accumulation Point

## Report Details

### Shortest Paths To the Accumulation Point ▾

Class Name	Shallow Heap	Retained Heap
<a href="#">java.lang.Object[768] @ 0x49645a0</a>	3,008	53,487,240
<a href="#">queue java.util.PriorityQueue @ 0x3a703b8</a>	24	53,487,272
<a href="#">events org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.LeakingQueue @ 0x3a703a8</a>	16	53,487,288
<a href="#">eventQueue org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.LeakQueueProcessor @ 0x3a703d0</a> LeakQueue.Processor.Thread.Thread	96	140,560
<a href="#">lq class org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.AnotherClassReferencingTheQueue @ 0x7a216d0 »</a>	8	8
Σ Total: 2 entries		

The chain of objects and references which keep the suspect alive

### Accumulated Objects ▾

Class name	Shallow Heap	Retained Heap	Percentage
<a href="#">org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.LeakingQueue @ 0x3a703a8</a>	16	53,487,288	80,18%
<a href="#">java.util.PriorityQueue @ 0x3a703b8</a>	24	53,487,272	80,18%
<a href="#">java.lang.Object[768] @ 0x49645a0</a>	3,008	53,487,240	80,18%
<a href="#">org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.LeakEventImpl @ 0x2ada618</a>	16	74,080	0,11%
<a href="#">org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.AnotherLeakEventImpl @ 0x2ada640</a>	16	74,080	0,11%
<a href="#">org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.LeakEventImpl @ 0x2ada668</a>	16	74,080	0,11%
<a href="#">org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.AnotherLeakEventImpl @ 0x2ada690</a>	16	74,080	0,11%
<a href="#">org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.LeakEventImpl @ 0x2ada6b8</a>	16	74,080	0,11%
<a href="#">org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.AnotherLeakEventImpl @ 0x2ada6e0</a>	16	74,080	0,11%
<a href="#">org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.LeakEventImpl @ 0x2ada708</a>	16	74,080	0,11%
<a href="#">org.eclipse.mat.demo.leak.AnotherLeakEventImpl @ 0x2ada730</a>	16	74,080	0,11%

A significant drop in the retained sizes shows the accumulation point

Accumulated objects



# Lab:

## Exercise 2,3: Find Memory Leaks 5117\_memory\_mat.zip



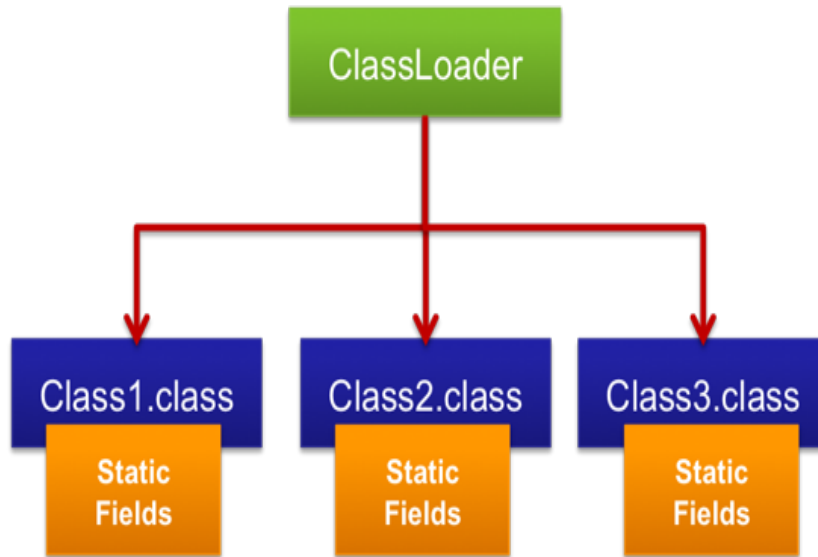


# **ClassLoader Memory Leak**



# ClassLoader and Classes it Loaded

- Every object has a reference to its class object
- Every class object has a reference to its classloader
- Every classloader in turn has a reference to each of the classes it has loaded, each of which might hold some static fields defined in the class: (This is the killer!!)





# Why ClassLoader Leak is so Common?

- To leak a classloader, it's enough to leave a reference to any object, created from a class, loaded by that classloader
  - > Even if that object seems completely harmless (e.g. doesn't have a single field), it will still hold on to its classloader



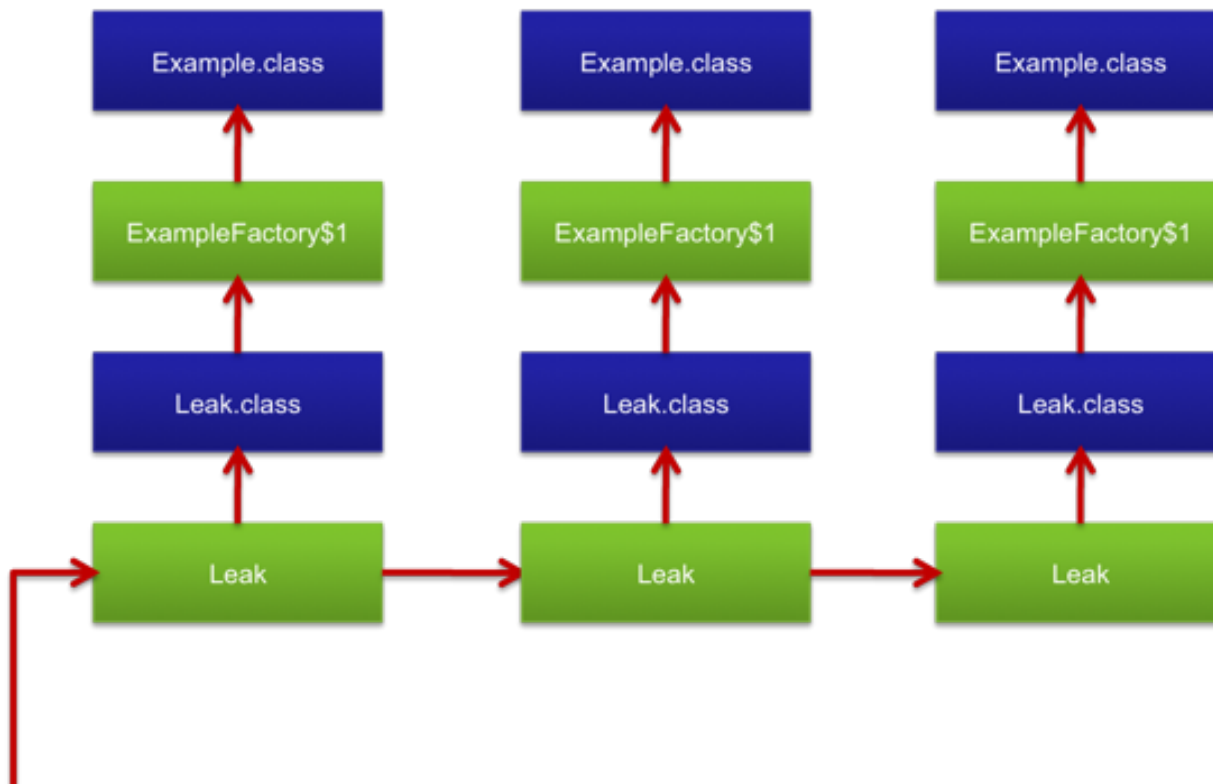
# Why ClassLoader Leak is so Bad?

- If a classloader is leaked, then it will hold on to all its classes and all their static fields
  - > Even if your application doesn't have any large static caches, it doesn't mean that the framework you use doesn't hold them for you (e.g. Log4J is a common culprit)
- Major cause of OutOfMemoryException



# ClassLoader Leak Example

- Each *Leak* object and its class object are leaking. They are holding on to their classloaders
- The classloaders are holding onto the *Example* class object (including the static fields) they have loaded





# Lab:

## Exercise 4: Classloader Memory leak 5117\_memory\_mat.zip





**Learn with Passion!**  
**JPassion.com**

