

Re: [SLE] bash Script Using Filenames with Embedded Spaces

Source: <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/SuSE/2006-11/msg01021.html>

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 - *Date:* Tue, 7 Nov 2006 16:37:22 -1000
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On Monday 06 November 2006 21:55, Darryl Gregorash wrote:

On 2006-11-07 00:06, Randall R Schulz wrote:

On Monday 06 November 2006 21:11, Lucky Leavell wrote:

...

OK, here is my complete script which runs under bash on an Ubuntu 6.06 system where I have the mp32ogg utility to convert mp3 to ogg files which k3b can handle:

```
for i in *.mp3
do
echo $i
mp32ogg $i
done
```

which works fine if the only craziness is embedded spaces in the file name; it failed when there were parentheses but, since that is rare in my situation, I can live with it. (Of course, if the single quoted \$i would work there ... I'm off to try it!)

<snip>

If the code fragment you gave above works, then what appears to be spaces are some other character code, not an ASCII space (040 / 0x20). There are other character codes that make no mark and are not zero-width. Perhaps your file names use one of them.

That simply is not possible. The list is determined by "for i in <list>"

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and that list is determined prior to the actual parsing of any commands inside the for loop. If it is a literal space for the ls command, then it must be a literal space for any other command. But the variation of results reported here, and your comments in particular, have made me wonder what effect the quotes will have placed in different places inside the script.

First I changed my test script to execute a "ls -l \$i" after the echo, and came up with this sort of result:

```
Antonio Vivaldi–Gloria Dixit Dominus Magnificat Choir of Kings College  
Cambridge and the Academy of Ancient Music.m3u
```

```
ls: Antonio: No such file or directory
```

```
ls: Vivaldi–Gloria: No such file or directory
```

```
ls: Dixit: No such file or directory
```

```
ls: Dominus: No such file or directory
```

```
(etc)
```

exactly as you stated.

The best I can think of is that the ls command takes a list, ie. the actual ls commandline format is not "ls [options] [filespec]", rather it is "ls [options] [list_of_filespecs]". Any command behaving in the same way, such as cp, will fail in the same way. When \$i in the ls command is placed inside double quotes, I get the expected ls output:

```
~>cat thingy
```

```
cd /pub/music/mp3
```

```
for i in *.m3u; do echo $i; ls -l "$i"; done
```

```
cd ~
```

```
~>./thingy
```

```
Antonio Vivaldi–Gloria Dixit Dominus Magnificat Choir of Kings College  
Cambridge and the Academy of Ancient Music.m3u
```

```
-rw-r--r-- 1 raven users 5364 2005-11-05 01:31 Antonio Vivaldi–Gloria  
Dixit Dominus Magnificat Choir of Kings College Cambridge and the  
Academy of Ancient Music.m3u
```

```
(etc)
```

If the double quotes are replaced with single quotes, each ls command returns an error, "ls: \$i: No such file or directory". I've forgotten the subtle nuances of quotes in the bash commandline to remember why this happens.

When the for loop is written the following way (and these can be single or double quotes, it does not matter), then there is a single variable in the list of the for loop, so the echo and ls commands are actually run just once each:

```
for i in '*.m3u'; do echo $i; ls -l $i; done
```

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and the output becomes:

~> ./thingy

Antonio Vivaldi–Gloria Dixit Dominus Magnificat Choir of Kings College
Cambridge and the Academy of Ancient Music.m3u Georg Friederich
Händel–Water Music Suite.m3u Johannes Brahms–Symphony no 1 in C minor Op
68 Thomas Sanderling Philharmonia Orchestra.m3u Johannes
Brahms–Symphony no 2 in D major Op 73 Thomas Sanderling Philharmonic
Orchestra.m3u Johannes Brahms–Symphony no 3 in F major Op 90 Tragic
Overture Op 81 Thomas Sanderling Philharmonia Orchestra.m3u Johannes
Brahms–Symphony no 4 in E minor Op 98 Thomas Sanderling Philharmonia
Orchestra.m3u Mikhail IppolitovIvanov–Liturgy of St John Chrysostom Op
37 Vespers Op 43.m3u St Petersburg Chamber Choir–Russian Easter.m3u The
Mamas The Papas–Beautiful Thing.m3u The Mamas The Papas–California
Dreamin.m3u The Mamas The Papas–If You Can Believe Your Eyes and
Ears.m3u The Tallis Scholars–Allegri Miserere Palestrina Missa Papae
Marcelli Mundy Vox Patris Caelestis.m3u Virtuosi di Praga–Music for the
Kings of Spain.m3u Westminster Abbey Choir and the Abbey
Consort–Miserere.m3u Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart–Requiem Slovak
Philharmonic Orchestra.m3u
–rw–r–r– 1 raven users 5364 2005–11–05 01:31 Antonio Vivaldi–Gloria
Dixit Dominus Magnificat Choir of Kings College Cambridge and the
Academy of Ancient Music.m3u
–rw–r–r– 1 raven users 624 2005–11–19 03:12 Georg Friederich
Händel–Water Music Suite.m3u
(etc)

Lesson: ALWAYS QUOTE VARIABLE REFERENCES WHOSE
CONTENT YOU DO NOT FULLY
CONTROL.

So, that is absolutely correct, but with the qualification that what you
get does depend on where and how you do the quoting, and AFAICT there is
no hard and fast rule that gives a single correct way to use quotes.

Did someone say the bash commandline isn't interesting and fun? :-)

This is a very interesting thread. Parts are going into my "Good Stuff" sub
folder. When in doubt–quote;thoughtfully. A relative constant, how nice.

Thanks,
Jerome

—

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