

LibraryCrunch

Service for the Next Generation Library: A Library 2.0 Perspective by Michael Casey

[« Helene's Netflix/Amazon Mashup](#) | [Main](#) | [On Notice!](#) »

Unintended Consequences

And search by search, click by click, the identity of AOL user No. 4417749 became easier to discern. There are queries for "landscapers in Lilburn, Ga," several people with the last name Arnold and "homes sold in shadow lake subdivision gwinnett county georgia."

It did not take much investigating to follow that data trail to Thelma Arnold, a 62-year-old widow who lives in Lilburn, Ga., frequently researches her friends' medical ailments and loves her three dogs. "Those are my searches," she said, after a reporter read part of the list to her.

AOL removed the search data from its site over the weekend and apologized for its release, saying it was an unauthorized move by a team that had hoped it would benefit academic researchers.

[Read the New York Times article here](#) (requires free registration)

Posted by Michael on August 8, 2006 10:36 PM | [Permalink](#)

→ Post a comment

(If you haven't left a comment here before, you may need to be approved by the site owner before your comment will appear. Until then, it won't appear on the entry. Thanks for waiting.)

Name:

Email Address:

URL:

☐ Remember personal info?

Comments: (you may use HTML tags for style)

Preview

Post