REAGANAGRAMS

MIKE MORTON
Hanover, New Hampshire

A. ROSS ECKLER
Morristown, New Jersey

Anagramming presidential names - rearranging their letters into other words, hopefully bearing some relation to the individual - has been a word pastime for many generations; the February 1977 issue of *Word Ways* summarizes the best (that is, the most apropos) anagrams for all the presidents from Washington through Carter. However, it is likely that no US president has a more readily anagrammable name than RONALD WILSON REAGAN - eighteen letters well-distributed between seven vowels and eleven consonants, with W the only unusual letter. A large number of his predecessors are saddled with the rare letters J, Z, V or X; among those who are not, GEORGE WASHINGTON has three Gs, and THOMAS WOODROW WILSON, three Ws.

A computer was programmed to generate word-lists exactly using up the letters AAADEGILLNNNOORRSW. Hundreds of thousands were produced, from which 241 were hand-selected. (Two other anagrams, identified by asterisks, were gleaned from other sources.) Many of the anagrams in this corpus are presented below.

As already noted, anagrams are supposed to bear some relation to their subjects; however, in this collection few have much relevance to Reagan. The leading candidate is certainly NO, DARLINGS, NO ERA LAW. Also meritorious are NO, A DARLING LASER NOW, referring presumably to the recent Star Wars ICBM defense proposals, and A WAR ON SOLAR LENDING, referring to his suppression of the Solar Bank. (In the August 1982 *Word Ways*, the anagram I GROAN, SON: END ALL WAR! was exhibited, and Harry Hazard of the National Puzzlers' League did OLD AGE RAN, RAN for RONALD REAGAN in the June 1980 Enigma.) One fervently hopes that LAND WAR GLORIES ANON and A DOLLAR GROWN INSANE, referring respectively to international and domestic disaster, are not prophetic. Perhaps it is fortunate that OIL appears only twice in the corpus, and GASOLINE once.

REDRAWN AN OIL SLOGAN NARROW GASOLINE LAND
ARRANGE LAND, SNOW, OIL

Still, there is much anagrammatic concern with IRAN; with 12 occurrences (plus one IRAN'S), this troubled country leads all other geographic references - nations ALGERIA, ANDORRA, ANGOLA, ENGLAND, LAOS, and ISRAEL, cities LONDON, LENINGRAD, OSLO and SAIGON, the SIERRAs, and adjectives ASIAN and NORWEGIAN(S). A few Iranian anagrams seem eerily logical:
GALLows ANon: RED IRAN
A SWOLLEN GOD RAN IRAN
IRAN LAWS DRONE ALONG

Angola is the second most anagrammed country, with ten:

SNARE WORLD IN ANGOLA
ANGOLA AS INNER WORLD
ANGOLA, A WORLD SINNER
ANGOLA WARNS RED LION
I SLANDER WORN ANGOLA

All in all, not a very complimentary view of this African nation! Actually, the three ISRAEL anagrams achieve a greater appositeness.

ISRAEL ON A WRONG LAND NOW NO GARLAND, ISRAEL
ISRAEL WON GRAND LOAN

The third anagram could refer to Israel's trauma in the wake of the 1982 Beirut massacre, or the failure of the invasion to create a pro-western Lebanon.

Among the geographical anagrams, five incorporate two place-names, and one even manages three:

LENINGRAD WAR ON LAOS LONDON WARNS ALGERIA
LENINGRAD WARN LAOS ENGLAND, IRAN, LAOS: ROW!

Does the last anagram refer to Olympic racing shell competitions, or a three-way dispute?

Curiously, animals and birds frequently inhabit these anagrams. The commonest animal is the mythical DRAGON, twice associated with Iran:

O, ANSWER AN ILL DRAGON I RAN A SWOLLEN DRAGON
IRAN, A SWOLLEN DRAGON DRAGON ARISEN ON WALL
ALIEN DRAGON RAN SLOW

The commonest real animal is the LION, the king of beasts:

GRAND ARENA, SLOW LION
Gnarled LION, OR A SWAN
ANGOLA WARNS RED LION

Note the juxtaposition of lions and birds in two phrases. The first anagram must refer to the ancient Coliseum spectacle of lions attacking Christian martyrs. Other animals include:

RAN NEAR SALLOW DINGO
A SWOLLEN DOG RAN IRAN
A ROLL ON A GRAND SWINE

Is Iran an animalistic country? Turning to birds, we have, besides the previously-mentioned swan and owls:

ARRANGED NO SLAIN OWL
DARING LOON, REAL SWAN

To complete this list:

GALLows ANon: RED IRAN
A SWOLLEN GOD RAN IRAN
IRAN LAWS DRONE ALONG

The most anagrams. A study of minor variations, including:

NOW NIL A LONG, NO LONG WANE

and the solar's ultimate:

NOR CLEAN

It is not surprising:

NO GLARE LINGER ON

O WAN SOL.

and financial:

OWN A GRAIND SOLAR
Wandering WARNING ON

Perhaps these constructions of a creature:

The concept indeed:

1 OWN SOL.
REGAIN SOL.
GAIN SOL.

A handful of:

SOLAR NON
NOW DRAG
SOLAR LAD
Glorious GLARE DOW

Minor variations:

NEW, ON = N
To complete the bestiary, we note:

ALL WRONG ON A SARDINE  DROWN ON A LARGE SNAIL
A NARROW GOLDEN SNAIL

The most frequently used word is SOLAR, appearing in 45 anagrams. A study of this corpus reveals how anagrams are often only minor variations on a theme. Several major themes can be identified, including the underlying nuclear reactions

NOW NIL A SOLAR DANGER  SOLAR LAW IN NO DANGER
the sun's ultimate fate
A LONG, NEW SOLAR NADIR  WANE ON, DARLING SOLAR
LONG WANE, SOLAR NADIR

and the solar wind (charged particles emitted from the sun, detectable in the earth's vicinity):

NOR GLEAN A SOLAR WIND  O, ANGEL RAN SOLAR WIND
It is not surprising to relate the sun to the dawn:
NO GLARE IN SOLAR DAWN  LAG, O INNER SOLAR DAWN
LINGER ON, A SOLAR DAWN  NO REAL SOLAR DAWNING
GO LEARN IN SOLAR DAWN

but it is surprising to see the sun associated with Leningrad

O WAN SOLAR LENINGRAD  A SOLAR LENINGRAD NOW

and financial deals:

OWN A GRAND SOLAR LIEN  LOANED SOLAR WARNING
GRIND SOLAR LOAN ANEW  ENDING SOLAR LOAN WAR
WANDERING SOLAR LOAN  A WAR ON SOLAR LENDING
WARNING ON SOLAR DEAL  SOLAR LOAN WANED: GRIN

Perhaps these refer to loans granted for the development and construction of equipment for converting solar energy to electricity.

The concept of owning (or annoying?) solar real estate is odd indeed:

I OWN SOLAR RANGELAND  NORWEGIAN SOLAR LAND
REGAIN SOLAR LAND NOW  IN ON SOLAR LAND WAGER
GAIN SOLAR LANDOWNER  SOLAR LAND-OWNING ERA
I NAG SOLAR LANDOWNER  NOW 1 ANGER SOLAR LAND

A handful of solar anagrams draw really strange pictures:

SOLAR NON-AID WRANGLE  DROWN LEAN SOLAR GAIN
NOW DRAG A SOLAR LINEN  DROWNING A SOLAR LANE
SOLAR LAD GROWN INANE  DRAWING ON SOLAR ELAN
I RAN DOWN SOLAR ANGEL  GALA SOLAR DINNER NOW
GLARE DOWN A SOLAR INN

Minor variations on the solar anagrams are possible (ANEW = A NEW, ON = NO, OWN = NOW = WON, ELAN = LANE).

The next most common word in the corpus is WAR, with 23 occurrences, plus one WARS. (If Reagan had another S and a T in
his name, one could convert SOLAR WAR to STAR WARS.) Land wars are planned:
NEARING SOLO LAND WAR
LONG LAND WAR ARisen
as well as midday ones:
GILD ARSENAL, NOON WAR
A number of cities and countries are associated with conflict:
IRAN’S GOLDEN LOAN WAR
LENINGRAD WAR ON LAOS
LENINGRAD SALOON WAR
LAND WAR GLORIES ANON
as well as midday ones:
GILD ARSENAL, NOON WAR
GRAND ALLIES, NOON WAR
Yet, war is not always glorified:
I’D LEARN NO WAR SLOGAN
NO RALLIES ON DANG WAR
In fact, it is sometimes denied:
NO SLAIN NEGRO WAR LAD
GO SNARL DENIAL "NO WAR!"
But, there are those who concede its inevitability: AGE, WAR AND SIN ROLL ON. Concluding this survey of war, most people would agree with the sentiment embodied in WAR ON ALL GRAND NOISE.
Not only is war common, but there are many other words associated with conflict and violence. Few would suspect that ARSENAL is the fifth commonest word in the corpus with 15 occurrences (LOAN has 16, and LAND, 21). Gold (or gilding) wins out over iron three to one as an arsenal cache:
GILD ARSENAL, NOON WAR
1 WARN, NO GOLD ARSENAL
GOLD ARSENAL WON IRAN
GNAW OLD IRON ARSENAL
Some images are vivid, if nonsensical; at least four anagrams an-thromorphize an arsenal:
1, AN ARSENAL GROWN OLD
NOW, O DARLING ARSENAL
ONWARD, ARSENAL LINGO
WOOL IN GRAND ARSENAL
There are four WARLORDs:
INANE WARLORD SLOGAN
SIGNAL A NEON WARLORD
GAIN SOLAR WARLORD
INSANE ANGLO WARLORD
Finally, there are eight SLA INs plus one SLEW:
LEARN NOW, O SLAIN GRAD
GO LEND AN ARROW, SLAIN
WAGER ANON
ROARING LANA SLEW DON
Were the victims of all this mayhem able, perhaps, to SOAR IN AN ANGEL WORLD? Or did the perpetrator confess 1 ERR; AND GAL-LOWS ANON? Besides the above example, arrows are used in:
Two anagrams use the word GLARE, one GROWL, four SLANDER, one WRANGLE, seven SNARL (plus two SNARLING) - truly, a contentious set!

Love, the antithesis to war, gets short shrift - EROS appears only in one slightly risque setting, DARLING, ANAL EROS NOW. Along the same lines, one finds:

LEWD SLOGAN RAN ON AIR
A SWELLING ARDOR, ANON

One can hardly imagine five anagrams less appropriate for Ronald Wilson Reagan:

Anagrams that use up the 18 letters in only three words are sufficiently noteworthy to record below (with the word-lengths):

6,6,6 NARROW SLOGAN DENIAL
5,5,8 ARRANGED ONION WALLS
5,6,7 SOLAR NON-AID WRANGLE
LOANED SOLAR WARNING
LONDON WARNS ALGERIA
INANE WARLORD SLOGAN
ONWARD, ARSENAL LINGO
INSANE ANGLO WARLORD
4,5,9 NARROWING LOAN DEALS
NARROWING LOAN SOLAR
NORWEGIAN SOLAR LAND
GAIN SOLAR LANDOWNER
WANDERING SOLAR LOAN
3,6,9 LENDINGRAD SALOON WAR
ALL REASON A-DROWNING
3,4,11 LONG NON-SALARIED WAR
IRAN: ALL-NEW DRAGONS
NARROW GASOLINE LAND

These anagrams, like most, have an artificial air; it is difficult to imagine finding ones like DOWAGER LOANS RAN NIL or A RAW, SNARLING NOODLE occurring naturally in running text. Our nominee for the most natural anagram in the corpus has already been mentioned twice: LONDON WARNS ALGERIA.

**QUERY**

Most mnemonics are sentences constructed of words whose initial letters are the same as those of the words to be memorized. Surely, more compact schemes can be devised. For example, I propose that the odd-numbered letters in a sentence match the initials of the words. To show how this works, consider the following list of US Presidents from Washington to Reagan:

**What, JiM, sMeAr JoVe? HoT sPiT! iF aPt, Bill, JoG a HuGe ArC. cHeCk My RaTs. We HoCk HeRe ThE ski, JaN; i FaCe Ron ...**

Can anyone improve on this? Or perhaps the reverse list is better to use?