

REAGANAGRAMS

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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 AAADGILLNNNOORRSW. 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

IRAN: ALL-NEW DRAGOONS
 GALLOWS DONE; IRAN RAN

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

ANGOLA SOLD INNER WAR
 SLANDER ANGOLA OR WIN
 ANGOLA IN SANER WORLD
 SLANDER ANGOLA IN ROW
 I SNARL "ANGOLA DOWNER"

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
 ISRAEL WON GRAND LOAN

NOW NO GARLAND, ISRAEL

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
 O, LENINGRAD WARN LAOS
 LAOS - A WORN LENINGRAD

LONDON WARNS ALGERIA
 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
 IRAN, A SWOLLEN DRAGON
 IRAN: SLOW LANE DRAGON
 ALIEN DRAGON RAN SLOW

I RAN A SWOLLEN DRAGON
 DRAGON ARISEN ON WALL
 NO ALLIES WARN DRAGON

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

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

ARRANGE LION AND OWLS
 ARRANGE OLD WAN LIONS

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

GORILLA WANDERS ANON
 NOD AN ANSWER, GORILLA

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

REGARD: ANAL LOON WINS
 A SWAN, A ROLLING DRONE

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 son 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 I 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 O, LONG LAND WAR ARISEN
LAND WAR GLORIES ANON

as well as midday ones:

GILD ARSENAL, NOON WAR GRAND ALLIES, NOON WAR

A number of cities and countries are associated with conflict:

IRAN'S GOLDEN LOAN WAR ANGOLA SOLD INNER WAR
LENINGRAD WAR ON LAOS LINGER AS A LONDON WAR
LENINGRAD SALOON WAR LONDON SIREN: GALA 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 GOLD ARSENAL WON IRAN
I WARN, NO GOLD ARSENAL GNAW OLD IRON ARSENAL

Some images are vivid, if nonsensical; at least four anagrams anthropomorphize an arsenal:

I, AN ARSENAL GROWN OLD DROWN OLGA IN ARSENAL
NOW, O DARLING ARSENAL OLD GRAIN NOW ARSENAL
ONWARD, ARSENAL LINGO ARSENAL AN IDIOT? WRONG
WOOL IN GRAND ARSENAL GROW, O INLAND ARSENAL

There are four WARLORDs:

INANE WARLORD SLOGAN GAIN SOLAR WARLORD
SIGNAL A NEON WARLORD INSANE ANGLO WARLORD*

Finally, there are eight SLAINs plus one SLEW:

LEARN NOW, O SLAIN GRAD SLAIN ANGEL WON ARDOR
GO LEND AN ARROW, SLAIN NO SLAIN NEGRO WAR LAD
LORD SLAIN; WAGER ANON WRONG LOAN SLAIN, DEAR
NO GRAND ERA, SLAIN LOW ARRANGED NO SLAIN OWL
ROARING LANA SLEW DON

Were the victims of all this mayhem able, perhaps, to SOAR IN AN ANGEL WORLD? Or did the perpetrator confess I ERR; AND GAL-
LOWS ANON? Besides the above example, arrows are used in:

I LAND ON ANGEL'S ARROW

LEND ASIAN LONG ARROW

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 risqué setting, DARLING, ANAL EROS NOW. Along the same lines, one finds:

LEWD SLOGAN RAN ON AIR
A SWELLING ARDOR, ANON

SINGLE ANAL ARDOR NOW
ORGIES DRAWN ALL 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	4,7,7	GORILLA WANDERS ANON
5,5,8	ARRANGED ONION WALLS		ANDORRA - NINE GALLOWS
5,6,7	SOLAR NON-AID WRANGLE	4,5,9	NARROWING LOAN DEALS
	LOANED SOLAR WARNING		NARROWING LADEN LAOS
	LONDON WARNS ALGERIA		NORWEGIAN SOLAR LAND
	INANE WARLORD SLOGAN		GAIN SOLAR LANDOWNER
	ONWARD, ARSENAL LINGO		WANDERING SOLAR LOAN
	INSANE ANGLO WARLORD*	3,6,9	LENINGRAD SALOON WAR
	NONREAL WORLDS AGAIN		ALL REASON A-DROWNING
4,6,8	AWARDING LONER'S LOAN	3,4,11	LONG NON-SALARIED WAR
	IRAN: ALL-NEW DRAGONS	2,5,11	AN ILL-ARRANGED SWOON
	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?