

JOEL DAVID FUNK

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An article with the title identical to the author's name? It's not that I'm an egotist, it's just that one has a lifetime of experience with one's own name and its logological permutations.

Take my three names in turn. JOEL, a Biblical prophet, syllabically divides into two nicknames, Jo and El (for Elliot, a college roommate). JOLE, its only anagram, is a variant of "jowl", which could refer to my middle-age avoirdupois. Read backwards, one sees LEO, my astrological rising sign. DAVID, a Biblical king, contains at least four other names: Avi (Israeli), Iva, Ida and Vida (as in Blue). FUNK, a Polish surname perhaps of German origin (it means "spark") is a single word-ladder step away from two rude words. FUNK is also defined in Webster's as a "shrinking back from fear or panic". In the November 1983 Kickshaws, Martin Gardner cites Stekel's "compulsion of the name" in which he noted that psychiatrists Freud and Jung championed the pleasure-principle and the idea of rebirth, respectively. As a psychologist, could it be that I was drawn to Abnormal Psychology which deals in part with anxiety and panic disorders?

My short name is JOEL FUNK. It anagrams to either JUNE FOLK (my parents were married then) or JON FLUKE (was my 11-year-younger brother Jonathan an accident?). It lends itself to a series of curtailments: JOEL FUN (an opinion held by my friends?), JOEL FU (a martial art I invented to obfuscate opponents through word-play), JO-ELF (a pet name given by an old flame), JOEL, JOE (a maternal uncle), and JO (part of a childhood nickname, Jo-Jo).

My full name, JOEL DAVID FUNK, contains each vowel exactly once, in the same order as OveRpAInFuL. The longest word with letters in order contained in my name is ELDIN ("a broadleaved composite plant with purplish rayed flowers", says Webster's) and the longest word with rearrangement is probably KINDLED or FOUND-ED. I wonder what these words say about me (Richard Milhous Nixon contains CRIMINAL and ODOR). I have no anagrammatic twins; the best I can find is OVID JUDE FLANK. What of anagrams? AVID FUNK DJ? OLE! refers perhaps to a Spanish disk jockey with certain enthusiasms. IF JUNK LOADED, V is an exhortation to give Churchill's V-for-Victory after loading the station wagon for the dump. When the basketball coach accused me of taking a trendy nickname, I replied J.V. FAD? I? "EL DUMBO?" If I ever report a charitable deduction to the Home for Retired Comedians on my Form 1040, I hope the IRS finds this JOKE FUND VALID. If I go to Japan in the rainy season, I can truthfully say I LOVED DANK FUJI.