

PRESIDENTIAL LETTER SHIFTS

MONTE J. ZERGER
Alamosa, Colorado

HAL

The next presidential shift will occur in the year of Arthur C. Clarke's classic, *2001: A Space Odyssey*. The letters in the name of the rogue computer, HAL, can be shifted forward one letter in the alphabet to produce IBM: HAL(1)IBM. This is probably the most widely celebrated case of alleged letter shifting, although Clarke denies any intentionality. Rivaling this in notoriety is the shifting of FBI by six letters to obtain LHO, the initials of Lee Harvey Oswald, something numerologists love to link with the sixth floor from which the shooting took place: FBI(6)LHO.

In letter shifts it is common to consider the alphabet as a circle with Z following A in letter advances. Thus W(5)B. Also a shift of a letter forward by n letters to a second letter is equivalent to shifting the second letter forward $(26-n)$ letters to the first letter. Thus, B(21)W.

WHO'S NEXT?

What will happen politically in 2001? Will Hal's year be Al's year? To find out, shift Clinton's initials four places: WC(4)AG. For confirmation shift the letters in Al appropriately and you obtain White House: AL(22)WH. Four more years of Democrats? Since Gore's home state is Tennessee while Bill's is Arkansas, I guess there is some justifiable logic in Clinton choosing a VP from Tennessee and a wife with maiden initials HR: TN(2)VP, AK(7)HR.

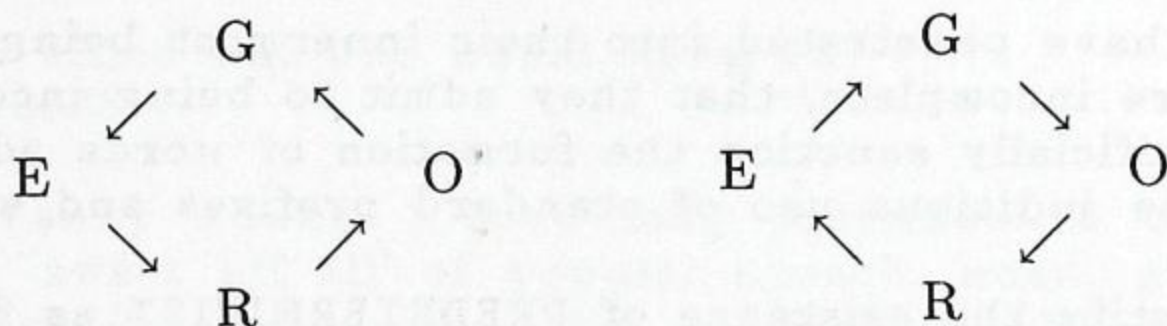
What has been the most successful presidential shift? A number of surveys ranking the presidents have been conducted over the years, the most recent by Ridings and McIver who polled 719 historians and political scientists. Franklin D. Roosevelt came in second, while his successor Harry Truman ranked seventh--the only two successive presidents who both rank in the top ten: FR(2)HT. And who's always at the top? It's Abe Lincoln, whose initials, as we have already seen, shift forward to WH.

Republicans will be relieved that after Gore's stint they will be back in power. Gore's wife provides us with the clue. Shift her initials nine letters and we have the heir to the throne, Colin Powell. In fact, we can go clear back to 1980 and began tracing the presidential changes, if we just realize that first ladies play key roles in the decryption: RR(10)BB married GB(1)HC married WC(4)AG married TG(9)CP.

THE EGO AND THE ID

In Freudian psychology, the id is described as that part of the psyche which is rooted in the unconscious, instinctual in nature, and inner-oriented--characteristics suggestive of the feminine principle. Advance the letters in Clinton's better half by a single letter: HC(1)ID.

In contradistinction to the id, the ego is that part of the psyche which is consciously directed, cognitive, and outer-oriented. These are traditionally masculine qualities. Place the letters EGO in a triangular pattern, and add an R to form a diamond as shown below.



Starting at the bottom and reading them counterclockwise (include the R twice) gives us Clinton's brother. Alternately, starting at the top and reading them clockwise produces Clinton's "political brother".

THE BILL-ENNIUM

Clinton will lead us into the 21st century, something he has repeatedly worked to capitalize on with his "bridge to the twenty-first century" phrase. From a logophile's perspective, who better to rule during this rare time transition than B.C.? Shift these letters outward in the alphabet one position and you obtain A.D.: A(1)BC(1)D.

Today historical scholars are beginning to use C.E. (common era) instead of A.D. when speaking about the calendar. Hmm...shift the letters in CE outward two places and you have our next president once again: A(2)EC(2)G.

In the spirit of any true psychic, I assume no responsibility for these predictions if they prove to be false. On the other hand, if they come true I insist they be splashed on the pages of Parade magazine.