

CELEBRITY ONE-WORD ANAGRAMS

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Did you know that guitar legend ERIC CLAPTON is a NARCOLEPTIC? Or that singer BRITNEY SPEARS is a member of the PRESBYTERIANS? Or that actress MEG RYAN hails from GERMANY? Well, actually, such observations are only true logologically; these are examples of famous people whose combined first and last names can be anagrammed into a single English word.

In addition to these three examples which are fairly well-known among celebrity one-word anagram fans, here are a few more that have appeared in print. Most of these were published in *The Enigma*; a few were collected via e-mail correspondence.

US vice president AL GORE gaoler
actor TOM CRUISE costumier
actor ED ASNER endears
actor SAL MINEO semolina
comedian SID CAESAR ascarides
Irish footballer LIAM BRADY admirably
Star Trek actor TIM RUSS truisms
singer AL GREEN general
Gary Hart's mistress DONNA RICE ordinance
"The Who" singer ROGER DALTRY retrogradely

All single words in this article can be found in Webster's Third Unabridged. Also well-known but still remarkable is former baseball player AL KALINE whose name becomes ALKALINE by simply joining the parts with no rearrangement.

Inspired by these, I set out with some computer assistance to find additional examples of this genre. We can distinguish two kinds, those that are just transposals with little or no semantic connection between the word and the celebrity, and those that have some flavor of the true anagram (i.e., with some appositeness between the word and the person).

actor ART ARAGON tarragona
Vegas magician LANCE BURTON contubernal
actor DEAN CAIN canadine
Nobel prize winner ELIAS CANETTI inelasticate
rock musician PETER CASE treescape
Australian snooker player EDDIE CHARLTON dechlorinated
astronaut MICHAEL COATS machicolates

actress ERIN GRAY grainery
 1950s baseball player TED GRAY tragedy
 actor COREY HEIM cherimoya

actress TESS HARPER spheraster
 actor IAN HOLM hominal
 Dallas Cowboys coach TOM LANDRY mordantly
 baseball pitcher DON LARSEN Northland
 singer BRENDA LEE reenabled
 comic book impresario STAN LEE leanest
 minor-league pitcher RON NECCIAI Ciceronian
 model CARRE OTIS crostarie
 actress CAROL POTTER protectoral
 Pee-Wee Herman PAUL RUEBENS unsuperable

NBC TV host RITA SEVER arrestive
 American football player KEN STABLER blanketers
 1950s singer RISE STEVENS restiveness
 comic MARTY ALLEN maternally
 writer PEARL BUCK parbuckle
 actor NED GLASS gladness
 actor MARTY INGELS streamingly
 Star Trek actor MARK LENARD landmarker
 actress and dancer ANITA MORRIS Rotarianism
 Beach Boy CARL WILSON Cornwallis

actor BEN GOULD bludgeon
 actor and composer CARL MATHIEU rheumatical
 actor CARLOS EAST escalators
 actor DENNIS COLE declension
 actor ERIC CANTONA canceration
 1960s rocker GERRY MARSDEN gerrymanders
 German actress INGRID STEEGER deregistering
 poet and singer LOU REED urodele
 Depeche Mode musician MARTIN GORE germinator
 actor PAUL LE MAT ampullate

Swedish actress MALIN EK manlike
 British actor PETER SANDS depressant
 writer ANNE RICE narceine

Of course, the meaning of celebrity is somewhat subjective, but I tried to stick with people who are at least well-known in their field. For instance, you may not have heard of Ron Necciai, but die-hard baseball fans know him as holding the all-time record for the most number of strikeouts (27) in a professional game.

And now a few celebrity anagrams, in which the word is at least partially related to the person involved.

Arizona baseball player TRAVIS LEE versatile
 actor EDDIE ALBERT deliberated
 actor ROBERT ALDA bardolater
 actor BRAD ROWE wardrobe
 singer and songwriter LISA LOEB isolable
 "Meet the Press" host TIM RUSSERT mistruster
 Hollywood sound man ART ROCHESTER orchestrater
 singer CASS ELLIOT oscillates
 Animal Planet host STEVE IRWIN interviews

At least we hope that Robert Alda did some Shakespeare at some point in his career! Note that Art Rochester's very apt anagram uses the alternative -er spelling (still found in Webster's Third). Of these, the last three are quite remarkably appropriate.

The longest one-word celebrity anagrams we have encountered are thirteen letters in length, a tie between Britney Spears, Eddie Charlton, and Ingrid Steeger. Word Ways readers are challenged to try and beat this record.

If we drop the somewhat fuzzy and subjective "celebrity" requirement and just use the names of ordinary but real people, how much better can be done? The longest we were able to find is CAROLYN MCALISTER at sixteen letters, transposing to MACRO-CRYSTALLINE. A reasonable seventeen-letter coinage (although not in Webster's Third or the OED) is BITTERHEARTEDNESS, the transposal of HERBERT EISENSTADT. The existence of these persons is attested by the Yahoo yellow pages directory (<http://people.yahoo.com>). The search that yielded these was fairly extensive but by no means exhaustive, so it is possible that these records can be bettered.