

Analyzing TIME's Person of the Year Selection

TIME's selection of the Person of the Year is always a newsmaking event in itself, but the choice of New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani as 2001's Person of the Year generated especially intense debate and discussion. Use the questions below to analyze TIME's choice and to explore your own views on the most important newsmakers of 2001.

BASIS FOR SELECTING THE PERSON OF THE YEAR

“The person or persons who most affected the news or our lives, for good or for ill, this year.”

—TIME founder Henry Luce, 1927

Unconventional Choices:

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1. Read the criteria for the Person of the Year, as set down by TIME founder Henry Luce in 1927 (see box). Based upon the stated criteria alone, review the news of the past year using the *Current Events Update* and other sources. Then create a “short list” of five candidates for 2001's Person of the Year. Beside each name, record three points of argument in favor of selecting this individual.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.

2. Research past choices. Go to www.time.com/poy2001 and click on the link to “Past POY Covers,” paying attention to the range of choices made over the years. Based on your knowledge of U.S. history, record the names of three choices you think might have been controversial at the time of their selection (you may wish to browse the “Notorious Leaders” feature). Make note of past selections that did not name an individual but instead chose a pair, a group or an object. Now return to your “short list” above and add an unconventional selection (a pair, group, object or other choice).

Controversial Choices:

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3. What do you imagine the consequences would have been if TIME had selected Osama bin Laden as Person of the Year?

What is the magazine staff's responsibility as journalists? As Americans during a time of war? Is there a conflict?

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4. According to “Mayor of the World” on page 3, on what basis did TIME select Giuliani instead of bin Laden? What is your reaction to this explanation?

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5. In your view, which candidate on your short list most deserved to be named Person of the Year? Why? Use the back of this page to write a one-paragraph defense of your choice, modeled on the statement about Giuliani's selection that appears in “Mayor of the World.”

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