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People of the Century

Individuals who shaped the 1900s.

To celebrate the turn of the century, we paused for a moment to remember a few of the personalities that shaped the 20th century. Their decisions, contributions, creations and images have carved a niche in time.

Louis Armstrong

This New Orleans native is heralded as one of the originators of scat singing and a legend in jazz music. Armstrong has heavily influenced the pop, rock, blues and jazz of today. His billboard smash "Hello, Dolly" knocked the Beatles down from the prestigious number one seat in 1964.

- [The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame: Louis Armstrong](#)

Neil Armstrong

"One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind," Armstrong said as he took man's first step on the moon after Apollo 11 touched down on the lunar surface. The Ohio native prefaced his space career with flying experience in the Army and the Navy.

- [The University of Michigan](#)

Marlon Brando

Americans fell in love with Brando when they met him in "A Streetcar Named Desire" and "On The Waterfront." The Nebraska native was an ardent supporter of civil rights and fair treatment for American Indians. He captivated fans with "The Godfather" and "Last Tango in Paris," and Roger Ebert has called Brando "the greatest screen actor of all time."

- [Dante's Marlon Brando Homepage](#)

Sir Winston Churchill

Sir Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill served in the army and the Parliament of England. Queen Elizabeth II knighted him, and John F. Kennedy made him an

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honorary U.S. citizen. Churchill gave the English people hope and pulled England through World War II after the Axis Powers had taken control of the majority of mainland Europe.

- [The Electronic Nobel Museum](#)

Bill Clinton

William Jefferson Clinton was the last United States President of the 20th Century. The country experienced a booming economy during his tenure, but Clinton received incredible scrutiny and an impeachment decision that color his legacy. His personal troubles in office are redefining what the role of a president is, what behavior is acceptable and what privacy limits a human being, regardless of title, is due.

- [The White House's Official Clinton Homepage](#)

Walt Disney

Walt Disney is synonymous with fun and fantasy. The legendary creator of Mickey Mouse has left his stamp on American culture. After growing up in Chicago and serving in the American Ambulance Corps, Disney introduced the world to Mickey, Snow White, Pinocchio, Fantasia and every child's playground, Disneyland.

- [InterGraffix's Walt Disney Site](#)

Henry Ford

Henry Ford, who lived from 1863-1947, revolutionized travel. He founded Ford Motor Company in 1903 and began the mass production of automobiles with the Model T and A. In 1913, he began the first moving assembly line, making cars less expensive and more available to everyday folks.

- [The Charles Brown Technology Education Site](#)

Sigmund Freud

Sigmund Freud's ideas have affected the way we think about sex, mentality, memory, adolescence and meaning. Freud's views are still contested, but they have forever influenced the way we think about thought.

- [The Library of Congress](#)

Mahatma Gandhi

He has been crowned the human being of the 20th century on many occasions. Gandhi dedicated his life to truth and liberty for every person, regardless of religion or race. He sent this message to the world through non-violent means and campaigned vigorously for Indian independence, human rights and economic exploitation. Mahatma means "The Great Soul."

- [The Mahatma Gandhi Complete Information Site](#)

Ernest Hemingway

This Illinois native served on the front of Italian battle lines in the volunteer ambulance unit. The Italian government decorated him after he was wounded in battle. Hemingway returned to Europe during his career as a newspaper reporter and found inspiration for many of his novels while traveling.

- [The Nobel Foundation: Biography of Ernest Hemingway](#)

Nikita Khrushchev

This Cold War warrior began his life as a shepherd and locksmith. He served in World War I and gained favor in Stalin's eyes. Once Premier of the Soviet Union, Khrushchev changed foreign policy strategy and sought peace and economic competition with Western countries. In his efforts to fight the Cold War, Khrushchev began the Cuban Missile Crisis that originally infuriated Americans and, after its conclusion, disappointed many Russians.

- [Think Quest Khrushchev's biography](#)

Martin Luther King, Jr.

A Baptist minister and dynamic speaker, King was a powerful civil rights leader. He established the Southern Christian Leadership Conference as a base for nonviolent protests, including the 1963 March on Washington and the 1965 voter registration drive in Selma, Ala. In 1964, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. While planning a Poor People's March for antipoverty legislation, he was shot and killed in Memphis, Tenn. James Earl Ray was convicted of the murder. 1999 marked the 70th anniversary of King's birth.

- [Seattle Times: Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)

Nelson Mandela

The 1993 winner of the Nobel peace Prize spent his life striving for equality in South Africa. He worked through the African National Council to fight the segregationist policies that dominated his African home. After years of imprisonment, Mandela was released in 1990, and in 1991, he became president of the African National Council.

- [The Nobel Prize Internet Archive](#)

Golda Meir

This brave Israeli woman, who spent her childhood in Wisconsin, is one of the shining success stories of female leadership. Golda Meir served as Israel's prime minister from 1969-1974. Under her leadership, Israel strengthened ties to the United States, fought terrorism and found increased economic assistance.

- [Past Prime Minister's Gallery](#)

Mother Teresa

Yugoslavian-born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu joined the Sisters of Loreto in 1928. Naming herself after St. Teresa of Lesiux, Mother Teresa became a servant of India's poorest and a symbol of what is good and unselfish to the rest of the world. She began the Missionaries of Charity in Calcutta, India, a group of nuns dedicated to serving the poor. The order began with 12 members and now has over 3,000 in 100 countries.

- [The Catholic Information Center](#)

Benito Mussolini

This founder of the Nationalist Fascist Party led Italy during World War I. He ended parliamentary government in Italy and became the country's dictator. During World War I and II, this ally of Hitler marched on Ethiopia, Albania, Greece and North Africa.

- [Encyclopedia.com: Benito Mussolini](#)

Ronald Reagan

The 40th President of the United States saw the end of the Cold War, played a lead role in the Iran Contra Affair and

authored the Trickle Down economics policy. The former film star ushered in the age of the media-efficient President, handling the press with a masterful touch.

- [Tax Policy's Ronald Reagan](#)

Andy Warhol

This contemporary artist has left a mark on popular culture. The multi-talented artist tried his hand at filmmaking, magazine publishing, illustrating, painting, producing music, designing and writing.

- [The Andy Warhol Museum](#)

Woodrow Wilson

Born a minister's son, Woodrow Wilson went on to lead the world out of World War I. Wilson strove for world peace with the failed League of Nations and the Treaty of Versailles, and succeeded with domestic legislation such as the Federal Reserve Act and the Underwood Act.

- [American Presidents: Woodrow Wilson](#)

--- J.H.



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