



Top News Stories from 1968

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World Events

- North Korea seizes US Navy ship *Pueblo*; holds 83 on board as spies (Jan. 23).
- North [Vietnamese](#) launch the [Tet Offensive](#), a turning point in the [Vietnam War](#) (Jan.-Feb.).
- American soldiers massacre 347 civilians at [My Lai](#) (March 16).
Background: [Vietnam War](#)
- [Czechoslovakia](#) is invaded by [Russians](#) and [Warsaw Pact](#) forces to crush liberal regime (Aug. 20).

World Statistics

Population: 4.378 billion

[population by decade](#)Nobel Peace Prize: [René Cassin \(France\)](#)[More World Statistics...](#)

U.S. Events

- President [Johnson](#) announces he will not seek or accept presidential renomination (March 31).
- [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#), civil rights leader, is [slain in Memphis](#) (April 4).
- [James Earl Ray](#), indicted in [King](#) murder, is sentenced to 99 years.
- Sen. [Robert F. Kennedy](#) is shot and critically wounded in Los Angeles hotel after winning California primary (June 5)—dies June 6.
Background: [Timeline of Kennedy tragedies](#)

U.S. Statistics

President: [Lyndon B. Johnson](#)Vice President: [Hubert H. Humphrey](#)

Population: 200,706,052

Life expectancy: 70.2 years

Violent Crime Rate (per 1,000): 33.7

Property Crime Rate (per 1,000) 30.7

Homicide Rate (per 100,000): 7.3

[More U.S. Statistics...](#)

Economics

US GDP (1998 dollars): \$910.6 billion

Federal spending: \$178.13 billion

Federal debt \$368.7 billion

Consumer Price Index: \$34.8

Unemployment: 3.8%

Cost of a first-class stamp: \$0.05 (\$0.06 as of 1/7/68)

[More Economics...](#)

Sports

Super Bowl

Green Bay d. Oakland

World Series

Detroit d. St. Louis Cardinals (4-3)

NBA Championship

Boston d. LA Lakers

Stanley Cup

Montreal d. St. Louis

Wimbledon

Women: Billie Jean King d. J. Tegart (9-7 7-5)

Men: Rod Laver d. T. Roche (6-3 6-4 6-2)

Kentucky Derby Champion

Forward Pass

NCAA Basketball Championship

UCLA d. North Carolina

NCAA Football Champions

Ohio St. (10-0-0) [1968 Summer Olympics](#)

Entertainment

Events

- [60 Minutes](#) airs on CBS, beginning its reign as the longest-running prime-time newsmagazine.
- The motion picture rating system debuts with G, PG, R and X.
- The rock musical *Hair* opens on Broadway.

Sports Links

[Pro Football Summary](#)

[Pro Basketball Summary](#)

[Pro Baseball Summary](#)

Entertainment Awards

Pulitzer Prizes

Music: *Echoes of Time and the River*, George Crumb

Academy Award, Best Picture: *In the Heat of the Night*, Walter Mirisch, producer (United Artists)

Movies

- *2001: A Space Odyssey, Romeo and Juliet, Funny Girl, The Lion in Winter, Oliver!*

Books

- [William H. Gass](#), *In the Heart of the Heart of the Country*
- [Gore Vidal](#), *Myra Breckenridge*

Science

- Prototype of world's first supersonic airliner. The Soviet-designed Tupolev Tu-144 made its first flight, Dec. 31. It first achieved supersonic speed on June 5, 1969. Background: [Famous Firsts in Aviation](#)
- The largest reservoir of American petroleum north of Mexico is discovered in Alaska.
- [Amniocentesis](#) is developed. Background: [reproduction](#)
- The successful flight of *Apollo 8* makes Commander Frank Borman, Command Module Pilot James Lovell, and Lunar Module Pilot William Anders the first people to orbit the moon.

Death

- [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)
- [Marcel Duchamp](#)
- [Helen Keller](#)
- [Upton Sinclair](#)
- [John Steinbeck](#)

Nobel Prize for Literature: Yasunari Kawabata (Japan)

Record of the Year: "Up, Up and Away," 5th Dimension

Album of the Year: *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, The Beatles (Capitol)

Song of the Year: "Up, Up and Away," Jimmy L. Webb, songwriter

Miss America: Debra Dene Barnes (KS)

[More Entertainment Awards...](#)

Nobel Prizes in Science

Chemistry: Lars Onsager (US), for development of system of equations in thermodynamics

Physics: Luis Walter Alvarez (US), for study of subatomic particles

Physiology or Medicine: Robert W. Holley, Har Gobind Khorana, and Marshall W. Nirenberg (all US), for studies of genetic code

Physiology or Medicine: *The Confessions of Nat Turner*, William Styron

[More Nobel Prizes in 1998...](#)

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[Year by Year: 1900-2014](#)

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