

THE SPRESS

December 19, 2025

YEAR IN REVIEW - THE BEST OF 2025

Top 10 biggest talked about topics

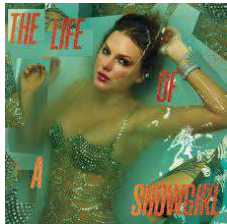
Adrianna McDonald & Alex Lashley



1. Blake Lively and Justin Baldoni- This topic was first brought to light in December 2024 when Blake Lively filed a sexual harassment complaint towards her “It Ends with Us” costar, Justin Baldoni. Many other celebrities were brought into this case with subpoenas, such as Taylor Swift, which caused extreme drama in Hollywood. The case is planned to extend into May 2026 for a formal trial.



2. Government group chat leak - One of the most scandalous events of the year was of one surrounding our own government when a senator accidentally added a journalist to a group chat between senators and their discussions of battle plans. Making this a public event to the whole world was a huge risk on domestic security. This leads to questions about how confidential our classified national secrets really are.



3. Life of a Showgirl - The album was announced in August and released in October creating much excitement in the world of Swifties. The album also sparked a lot of criticism with Swift’s choice in topics for some of the more controversial songs.



4. Benson Boone - Every year there are always new popstars that emerge and make headlines. One of the more unique ones to come out was Benson Boone. While some would think he is just an ordinary pop star others think he is nothing more than a joke. With his song “mystical magical” trending on the internet as sort of meme. However the strangest thing to come out of this was his openness to it, instead of getting upset over the hate he embraced it and started joining in on the meme. All of these actions he has done over the years has made him an unforgettable figure in music this year.



5. All female space flight - This spaceflight on Blue Origin’s NS-31 carried pop star Katy Perry, journalist Gayle King, former NASA scientist Aisha Bowe, activist Amanda Nguyen, producer Kerianne Flynn, and organizer Lauren Sánchez. All over the US, there was a spark in speculation of the flight being faked or its significance in the world.

Top 10 biggest talked about topics (con't)

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6. Coldplay kisscam - People having affairs is nothing new; it's been happening in society since the dawn of time. People getting exposed for such is also nothing new. However this one stuck out and shocked the world when a kisscam at a Coldplay concert turned the camera to a notable married CEO and his girlfriend. Their shock of the camera led people to make fun of the incident and have it go viral affecting the lives of this man, the woman and their families.



7. Drake v. Kendrick beef - The beef started in March 2024 with rapper J. Cole's comment of the "big three" on Drake's "First Person Shooter". Kendrick responded with "it's just big me" in his song "Like That". These first songs reignited the 2013 feud and sparked a long list of diss tracks lasting towards the latter half of February 2025.



8. AI videos and memes - We're all used to the usual memes that have paraded the internet ever since the internet first came out. However, the introduction of computer generated ones is a new topic to come out of this year. While some think that they are funny and allow people to create abstract ideas, others think that it diminishes creativity and hard work.



9. 6/7 - The meme started in late 2024 carrying into the new year. This topic spread like wildfire to all different people from elementary school kids to older generations. 6/7 took over the world and individuals' lives as they still hear it everyday. There's no doubt that it will not end with the new year.

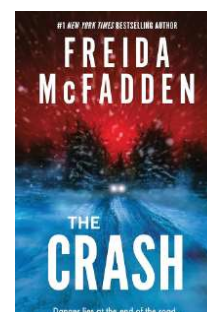
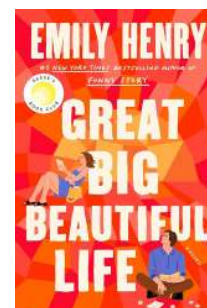


10. Wicked - The first movie came out in November of 2024 and its popularity carried into early 2025. The anticipation for the second movie brewed all year until its release in November of 2025. It pushes the limits of cinematography and it has been raved about as a highly esteemed twist on the unforgettable Wizard of Oz.

Best books

Cassie Oxford

1. “Onyx Storm” by Rebecca Yarros is the third book of The Empyrean series, with a rating of 4.21 stars on Goodreads. The book takes place 18 months later at Basgiath War College, where Violet Sorrengail must not only face the battle of enemies closing in, but also the battle of trust. Violet must embark on a journey to find allies so the fight can be won and she can save everyone she loves before the storm overcomes them.
2. “Sunrise on the Reaping” by Suzanne Collins is part of The Hunger Games franchise and has a rating of 4.51 stars on Goodreads. It highlights the 50th annual Hunger Games, in which Haymitch Abernathy, the mentor for District 12 from The Hunger Games trilogy, is selected into the Games at a young age. Because this year in a Quarter Quell, twice as many tributes will be taken from their homes, resulting in more lost lives. As the Games begin, Haymitch realizes he is set up to fail, but something in him wants to fight back.
3. “Great Big Beautiful Life” by Emily Henry has a rating of 3.97 stars on Goodreads. In this book, two writers, Alice Scott and Hayden Anderson, compete for the chance to tell a larger-than-life story of a woman who seems to have a few plot twists up her sleeve. This woman, Margaret Ives, is an heiress and daughter of one of the most storied families in the 20th Century. However, she only gives Alice and Hayden bits and pieces of her story, so they could both be writing it differently, and just like Margaret’s, their story could be a mystery, tragedy, or even a love ballad. It all depends on who’s writing it.
4. “Atmosphere” by Taylor Jenkins Reid has a rating of 4.34 stars on Goodreads. Joan Goodwin, the main character of the novel, is a professor of physics and astronomy and has always been obsessed with stars. One day, she comes across an advertisement seeking the first women scientists to join NASA’s space shuttle program, which Joan immediately wants to be one of the women to go to space. However, after all her training and getting to know the other scientists, on a mission in December of 1984, everything changed.
5. “The Crash” by Freida McFadden has a rating of 3.69 stars on Goodreads. The novel focuses on Tegan, who is eight months pregnant and desperately getting away from her crumbled life. She travels to stay with her brother, but due to an oncoming blizzard, she never arrives at her destination. She is welcomed in by a nice couple who give her a place to stay, but Tegan quickly realizes that they are not who she thought they were, and instead, she is in great danger, so she must protect herself and her unborn baby.



Best movies

Dalya Jabra



1. “A Minecraft Movie” follows four ordinary people from the real world, who are pulled into the “Overworld” through a portal, where they must learn how to craft and build to survive and defeat an evil villain that is aiming to control the Nether and Overworld, all with the help of Steve, an experienced builder. As these four are figuring out how to get back home from the Overworld, they begin to rediscover their creativity.



2. In the “Lilo & Stitch” live-action movie, Lilo is a lonely, Hawaiian girl who adopts a chaotic alien that she names Stitch, believing he is a dog. With her older sister, Nani, she tries her best to keep her family together. Lilo’s life begins to get complicated, as alien captors begin hunting for Stitch, frustrating Lilo and her concept of family, or “ohana.”



3. In “Superman,” Clark Kent is already a hero, but he is still figuring out how to balance his human upbringing with his alien heritage. Lex Luthor, a billionaire, uses a global incident to turn public opinion against Superman. This forces the hero to defend his reputation and the values of truth and justice that he believes in. With help from Lois Lane and other heroes, Superman must stop Luthor’s schemes and fully embrace his role as Earth’s protector.



4. In “Jurassic World: Rebirth,” a team is sent to a remote island filled with dinosaurs to collect genetic samples needed to create a new heart medicine. Their mission gets complicated when they also have to rescue a civilian family whose boat was shipwrecked nearby. Together, both groups must survive attacks from regular dinosaurs and new, mutated creatures that have secretly lived on the island for years.



5. “Wicked: For Good” begins after Elphaba has flown away and gone into exile, choosing to fight against the Wizard of Oz’s corrupt government and his propaganda machine, led by Madame Morrible. Meanwhile, Glinda accepts her role as the Wizard’s public symbol of goodness, but internally struggles with the truth about Elphaba and the Wizard’s oppressive actions.

Biggest NFL shocks

Devin Kelly

1. The biggest shock in the 2025 NFL season is the Chiefs missing the playoffs, falling to 6-8 by Week 15 with a loss to the Chargers, a stark contrast to their dynasty, marked by offensive line woes, Mahomes's struggles (interceptions, missed throws), crucial dropped passes by Kelce/Rice, penalty issues, and a dormant run game, making their first absence from the postseason in years a major headline despite Travis Kelce's belief they're better than last year. Additionally, in the December 14, 2025 game against the Chargers, Patrick Mahomes tore his ACL.



2. The second biggest shock this NFL season for an unexpectedly good team is arguably the New England Patriots(11-3), who went from a struggling franchise to a top AFC seed, or the Indianapolis Colts, who significantly overperformed expectations with Daniel Jones leading a strong resurgence, while the Tampa Bay Buccaneers also defied logic with Baker Mayfield's MVP-caliber play and the Carolina Panthers surprisingly contended in the NFC South.



3. The third biggest shock of the Denver Broncos' 2025 season is widely considered their unforeseen success and emergence as an elite AFC team, with a 12-2 start, after many expected a rebuilding year. This surprise has been driven by their stout defense and several dramatic, come-from-behind victories.



NFL Article

Jeremy Oxford



1. Treyton Burks - Commanders vs Broncos in week 13: Treyton Burks made an incredible OBJ style touchdown grab, making this one of the best catches, if not the best catch this NFL season.



2. Isaac TeSlaa - Lions vs Packers in week 1: In his rookie debut game, Issac TeSlaa came down with a clutch one-handed catch, getting him into the endzone for his first career touchdown.



3. Puka Nacua - Rams vs Panthers in week 13: Out of all of Puca Nacua's one-handed catches this season, his one handed catch against the Panthers really showed off his elite athleticism, grabbing the ball with one hand off of the defender.



4. Brock Bowers - Raiders vs Chargers in week 13: Having two one-handed touchdown catches this season, Brock Bowers nearly lets the football touch the ground, but is able to snatch it with one hand before it does.



5. Bijan Robinson - Falcons vs Buccaneers in week 15: Bijan Robinson almost came down with one of the best one handed catches of the season, but he couldn't keep both of his feet down, making the pass incomplete. He never dropped the ball going down, so this was a very impressive one-handed catch by an elite running back.

Best QBs of the season

Kolby Kostelnik

1. Josh Allen: Allen has 3,276 passing yards this season. He's thrown 25 touchdowns and 10 interceptions. He also has huge rushing upside adding 535 rushing yards and 12 scores, making his total touchdown count 37. He has led the Bills to a 10-4 record making them the number 6 seed on the AFC side of the playoffs.



2. Matthew Stafford: Stafford has thrown for 3,722 yards and 37 touchdowns. He's done all of this while only throwing 5 interceptions. He has no rushing upside but that's no problem because of his amazing arm talent. He's led the Rams to a 11-3 record and the number 1 seed on the NFC side of the playoffs.



3. Drake Maye: Maye is off to a great second year tallying up 3,567 passing yards and 23 passing touchdowns, all while only throwing 7 interceptions. Maye has also ran in for four scores making his season total for touchdowns 27. While his stats "maye" make you think he's just an average quarterback he certainly is not. He's one of the most consistent players in the league and you can always count on him.



4. Dak Prescott: Prescott has thrown for the most yards in the league with 3,931. He's put up 26 passing touchdowns and 2 rushing touchdowns, making his season total 28. He's thrown 10 interceptions which is a good amount, but with how much he's getting the ball downfield it's not much of a problem. While the Cowboys are only 6-7-1, it's certainly not because of Prescott.



5. Patrick Mahomes: Despite the season ending injury, Mahomes has been great this season. He's passed for 3,587 yards and 22 touchdowns. All while throwing 11 interceptions. Mahomes has also ran for 422 yards and 5 touchdowns. The Chiefs are currently 6-8 and eliminated from the playoffs, but when Mahomes comes back, this team will be right back to where they were.



Biggest news stories

Kate Seitz



1. The death of Charlie Kirk - On September 10, Charlie Kirk, a right-wing political activist, was assassinated at Utah Valley University while speaking at an outdoor campus debate. His death was the most mainstream example of an alarming increase in political violence in the United States.



2. Pope Francis dies and a new pope is announced - Pope Francis died on April 21, 2025. After a short conclave, Cardinal Robert Prevost became Pope Leo XIV, making the Chicago-raised man the first ever American pope.



3. The Epstein files - The Epstein files are a series of documents detailing the criminal activities of convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein and his affiliates. Claims surrounding the existence of a client list first surfaced in the immediate aftermath of Epstein's death, reaching heightened prominence in 2025 when Elon Musk alleged the U.S. president Donald Trump was among those listed. As news of this spread, so did nation-wide protests demanding transparency from the government and a complete release of the files to the public.



4. Mahmoud Khalil - Mahmoud Khalil, a Columbia University graduate student and pro-Palestinian activist, was arrested in March of 2025 by the Trump administration under claims his speech threatened U.S. foreign policy. ICE kept him in an immigration detention in Louisiana for 104 days before he was released.



5. The government shutdown - 2025 saw the longest federal government shutdown in all of U.S. history, lasting 43 days from October 1, 2025, to November 12, 2025. During this time, thousands of federal employees were temporarily laid off, while around 2 million other "essential" workers were required to work without immediate pay. Staffing shortages caused major air travel disruptions and funds ran dry for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) before Democrats and Republicans eventually passed a spending bill.



6. Astronauts stranded in space - Suni Williams and Butch Wilmore, two NASA astronauts, were sent to the International Space Station for a round trip that was supposed to last just over a week. However, due to technical issues, the pair ended up stuck in space for 286 days.