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Ahmadinejad bans all Western music in Iranian state television and radio broadcasts, 2005

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Lead Story

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Dec 19, 1998:

President Clinton impeached

December 19

After nearly 14 hours of debate, the House of Representatives approves two articles of impeachment against President [Bill Clinton](#), charging him with lying under oath to a federal grand jury and obstructing justice. Clinton, the second president in American history to be impeached, vowed to finish his term.

In November 1995, Clinton began an affair with Monica Lewinsky, a 21-year-old unpaid intern. Over the course of a year and a half, the president and Lewinsky had nearly a dozen sexual encounters in the White House. In April 1996, Lewinsky was transferred to the [Pentagon](#). That summer, she first confided in Pentagon co-worker Linda Tripp about her sexual relationship with the president. In 1997, with the relationship over, Tripp began secretly to record conversations with Lewinsky, in which Lewinsky gave Tripp details about the affair.

In December, lawyers for Paula Jones, who was suing the president on sexual harassment charges, subpoenaed Lewinsky. In January 1998, allegedly under the recommendation of the president, Lewinsky filed an affidavit in which she denied ever having had a sexual relationship with him. Five days later, Tripp contacted the office of Kenneth Starr, the Whitewater independent counsel, to talk about Lewinsky and the tapes she made of their conversations. Tripp, wired by FBI agents working with Starr, met with Lewinsky again, and on January 16, Lewinsky was taken by FBI agents and U.S. attorneys to a hotel room where she was questioned and offered immunity if she cooperated with the prosecution. A few days later, the story broke, and Clinton publicly denied the allegations, saying, "I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Ms. Lewinsky."

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In late July, lawyers for Lewinsky and Starr worked out a full-immunity agreement covering both Lewinsky and her parents, all of whom Starr had threatened with prosecution. On August 6, Lewinsky appeared before the grand jury to begin her testimony, and on August 17 President Clinton testified. Contrary to his testimony in the Paula Jones sexual-harassment case, President Clinton acknowledged to prosecutors from the office of the independent counsel that he had had an extramarital affair with Ms. Lewinsky.

In four hours of closed-door testimony, conducted in the Map Room of the White House, Clinton spoke live via closed-circuit television to a grand jury in a nearby federal courthouse. He was the first sitting president ever to testify before a grand jury investigating his conduct. That evening, President Clinton also gave a four-minute televised address to the nation in which he admitted he had engaged in an inappropriate relationship with Lewinsky. In the brief speech, which was wrought with legalisms, the word "sex" was never spoken, and the word "regret" was used only in reference to his admission that he misled the public and his family.

Less than a month later, on September 9, Kenneth Starr submitted his report and 18 boxes of supporting documents to the House of Representatives. Released to the public two days later, the [Starr Report outlined a case for impeaching Clinton on 11 grounds](#), including [perjury, obstruction of justice, witness-tampering, and abuse of power](#), and also provided explicit details of the sexual relationship between the president and Ms. Lewinsky. On October 8, the House authorized a wide-ranging impeachment inquiry, and on December 11, the House Judiciary Committee approved three articles of impeachment. On December 19, the House impeached Clinton.

On January 7, 1999, in a congressional procedure not seen since the 1868 impeachment trial of President [Andrew Johnson](#), the trial of President Clinton got underway in the Senate. As instructed in Article 1 of the [U.S. Constitution](#), the chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court (William Rehnquist at this time) was sworn in to preside, and the senators were sworn in as jurors.

Five weeks later, on February 12, the Senate voted on whether to remove Clinton from office. The president was acquitted on both articles of impeachment. The prosecution needed a two-thirds majority to convict but failed to achieve even a bare majority. Rejecting the first charge of perjury, 45 Democrats and 10 Republicans voted "not guilty," and on the charge of obstruction of justice the Senate was split 50-50. After the trial concluded, President Clinton said he was "profoundly sorry" for the burden his behavior imposed on Congress and the American people.

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December 19

This Week in History, Dec 19 - Dec 25

Dec 19, 1998	President Clinton impeached
Dec 20, 1957	Elvis Presley is drafted
Dec 21, 1988	Pan Am Flight 103 explodes over Scotland
Dec 22, 1956	First gorilla born in captivity
Dec 23, 1888	Van Gogh chops off ear
Dec 24, 1979	Soviet tanks roll into Afghanistan
Dec 25, 1914	The Christmas Truce

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