

You read the following announcement in an international magazine.

### **'Person of the Year' Competition**

Who do you think deserves this title?

Write and tell us about the person who has contributed the most to making the year memorable. You must justify your choice by explaining what the person's contribution has been and why the person will be remembered.

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If I had to choose 'a Person of the Year', the title would probably be for the American mathematician John Forbes Nash, Jr., who died tragically last year with his wife in a car crash. Nash had just received the Abel Prize, which is given by the Government of Norway annually to outstanding mathematicians.

John Nash has been a great person and a major scientist not only in 2015, but in the whole 20<sup>th</sup> Century. His interesting life is illustrated in the Sylvia Nasar's biography "A beautiful mind", which inspired the 2001 film by the same name.

Nash was a child prodigy in the field of mathematics. He studied at the prestigious university of Princeton, where he developed his theory of non-cooperative games, later known as the Nash equilibrium. John Nash can be considered one of the most influential mathematicians of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. His works on game theory have influenced many disciplines, like logic, computing and economics.

But it is not his mathematical genius which has driven me to name him "the Person of the Year", but his – almost heroic – struggle against mental illness, which he finally defeated. At a very young age he was diagnosed with schizophrenia, which affected both his family and academic life. After some decades troubled by the disease, he gradually recovered from his irrational thoughts and could work again in mathematics. In the last years of his life, he often gave lectures about the stigma of the mentally ill people and the way to fight against it.