

**For Immediate Release**  
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### **Skeptics Predictions for 2006**

On 3 December 2005 the Phoenix Skeptics held their annual Predictions meeting at which the membership produced the following list of predictions for the next 14 months and beyond. In the fourteenth year of our ongoing experiment in prognostication, we had 45 of 56 answers correct, for a hit rate of 80.4. Our Hall of Fame predictions had 12 of 13 right, for a hit rate of 92%. If the Patriots win the Superbowl yet again this year, they'll make our Hall of fame.

Among our hits in 2005 were Britney Spears' marital problems, the death of Chief Justice Renquist, the spike in housing prices for the Valley of the Sun, the emerging spectre of a new Flu pandemic and the devastating hurricane season.

Our thesis with this experiment has been and continues to be this: a dozen or so reasonably well informed individuals can accurately predict events in the near future without reliance on any supernatural powers. Our hit ratio continues to be higher than that of the professional psychics out there – which begs the questions: are their powers faulty, or are they just not reasonably well informed? (The answer to that question is more predictable than the government's buggy reaction to criticism.)

In our tenth year of predictions we decided to shift our format slightly and continue with it. Not only do we have over fifty predictions for 2006, but we continue with our **Hall of Fame** for predictions that have been right so often in the past that we're fairly certain they'll continue to be true in the future. Nothing succeeds like success and with these predictions, past performance *is* indicative of future results.

#### **Hall of Fame Predictions**

- 1) Jesus Christ will again forego his return to this world.
- 2) A major sports figure will be involved in a sex scandal.
- 3) O. J. Simpson's search for his ex-wife's murderer is fruitless this year.
- 4) Last year's winner of the World Series will not repeat in this year.
- 5) Last year's winner of the Superbowl will not repeat this year.
- 6) Scientists discover a new comet.
- 7) Advances in cloning technology fuel an ethics debate.
- 8) Abortion becomes a hot topic of debate.
- 9) Death haunts the House of Windsor.
- 10) A sex scandal ends a politician's career.
- 11) Major new dinosaur species discovered.
- 12) Bigfoot and Yeti elude capture.
- 13) The age of the Universe continues to get older.

Our predictions for 2006 and beyond are:

#### **World News**

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|---|--|
| 1) A Bird Flu Pandemic fails to emerge.                 | 4) Osama bin Laden eludes capture.                 |
| 2) China does not, as yet, foreclose on America's debt. | 5) No major terrorist attack in the United States. |
| 3) Saddam Hussein is convicted.                         | 6) Democracy continues to elude Saudi citizenry.   |

- 7) Incidence of severe food poisoning is a suspected terrorist attack.

#### **Energy News**

- 8) Alternate fuel vehicles make strides in 2006.
- 9) Nuclear power gains in popularity.
- 10) Gas Prices soar in the summer of 2006.
- 11) New source of natural gas is discovered.
- 12) World shortage of solar power units narrows energy options in the USA.

#### **Politics and the economy**

- 13) The "National Strategy for Victory in Iraq" fails to produce results.
- 14) Stock market tops 11,000.
- 15) Major retail chain disappears.
- 16) Affordable mortgages are no longer affordable
- 17) The Alito confirmation goes on to victory.
- 18) Immigration reforms stall.
- 19) US Government continues to deny the reality of Global Warming.
- 20) The New Orleans diaspora is not reversed.
- 21) High-ranking political officials indicted.
- 22) Dick Cheney develops torturous health problems.

#### **Elections 2006**

- 23) Voting fraud charges overshadow US elections.
- 24) Republicans are shocked in November election aftermath.
- 25) Sheriff Joe Arpaio reelected, but is disappointed in the lack of a coronation.
- 26) Arizona's Governor is reelected.
- 27) Podcasts play a role in the 2006 elections.

#### **Science, technology and weather**

- 28) Scientists discover new planet.
- 29) Archeological find expands human family tree.
- 30) Nanotechnology produces a big payoff.
- 31) New Computer virus cripples email servers.
- 32) The popularity of Linux/Unix operating systems continues to grow.
- 33) The incidence of Sexually-Transmitted Diseases rises.
- 34) Ecological disaster devastates China.
- 35) US Heartland shaken by killer earthquake.
- 36) Hurricane menace gains strength in the 2006 season.
- 37) Promising therapy for obesity brightens the future.

#### **Religion and Intelligent Design**

- 38) Intelligent design is crushed in court.
- 39) Further sex scandals rock the Catholic Church.
- 40) The Flying Spagetti Monster controversy continues.
- 41) Major figure in Christianity indicted.
- 42) Mainstream Christianity revolts against dictates of Fundamentalists.
- 43) John-Paul II becomes a Saint.
- 44) Decline in the number of Catholic priests causes reversal on Vatican anti-gay prohibitions.
- 45) The Church of Scientology continues on Cruise control.
- 46) Pat Robertson continues to be plagued by foot-in-mouth disease.
- 47) Muslim mainstream denounces terrorism.

### **Popular culture and Sports**

- 48) Shocking revelations rewrite the story of Marilyn Monroe's death.
- 49) Americans come to rely on unconventional sources for news.
- 50) Hollywood starlet's unconventional behavior shocks America.
- 51) Arizona Cardinals show little improvement in 2006.
- 52) The Suns advance in the playoffs.
- 53) The Diamondbacks chase the playoffs.
- 54) Confidence in the news media hits new low.
- 55) Newspapers continue to decline in popularity.
- 56) Curtain call for a popular acting icon.
- 57) Female star takes a much younger boy-toy for a lover.
- 58) Michael Jackson returns to the United States.
- 59) Portable video increases in popularity.
- 60) Martha Stewart's career slips into remission.

And, as always, we predict our hit rate will be better than that of the supermarket tabloid psychics.