

Shuttle tragedy overpublicized

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Recently, as we're sure you know, the space shuttle Challenger exploded during lift off, killing all aboard. Most people in the nation would agree that this was a great tragedy and a time for national mourning. We do not necessarily agree.

We agree that it was truly a sad event. Death is always a sad event, yet it is a fact we must all live with. However, it is also a fact that oft times we seem to find it easy to ignore. That is, until it happens to some heroic figure.

When this case, the hero wasn't any of the other six astronauts killed, but Christa McAuliffe.

We identified with Christa. She represented the common person. So consequently, her death was like a death in the family.

We will say with fair certainty that if the shuttle would have exploded with merely trained, professional astronauts on board, the public reaction would not have been so intense. After all, astronauts live with risk. That's part of their job.

Without Christa, the media might have given the whole story maybe fifteen minutes coverage. We

would have been spared the hours of repeated explosion footage, the speculations from NASA about the causes, the apologies to save face, and most assuredly, the distastefully replayed Hollywood-style close-up shots of the horrified McAuliffe parents as they watched their daughter disintegrate with the ill-fated shuttle.

So across America, flags flew at half mast in honor of the seven astronauts. The nation is shocked and mourns their death. Letters pour in conveying condolences both to Christa McAuliffe's family and to the school children whom she taught. But what's as lamentable as these deaths we're mourning is the hypocrisy being revealed in its entirety. We don't mean to condemn these actions. On the contrary, it is extremely commendable and encouraging to see such a wide spread expression of concern for our fellow humans.

However, let us cite the fact that thousands of Americans die every day just in auto accidents. Hundreds at a time perish in airline disasters. Worse yet, each day thousands will die of hunger in Africa, and more in conflicts throughout Central America, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia, as did 53,000 of our Vietnam vets whom we didn't honor for over a decade. Across the face of the earth oppression,

famine and human rights atrocities run rampant.

Perhaps it seems that we paint a dark picture of world events. We merely wish to point out that the thousands who die each day are not just nameless statistics. They are humans, many of whom die deaths far worse than that experienced by the crew of the Challenger, deaths just as tragic and untimely, and certainly just as courageous. Why are the flags not at half-mast for these victims? The answer is simple; because only the heroes get the flags.

The shuttle explosion has been compared much with the JFK shooting insofar as the public shock. The reason for the shock is apparent. Like the JFK shooting, it happened before America's eyes on National TV. It would seem that death must happen spontaneously and unexpectedly during a telecast to have any impact on us. Otherwise, it's treated like a distant concept happening to a distant somebody else.

To these writers, on a human scale, the shuttle explosion was nothing more than a glorified plane crash. Like most plane crashes, it was an accident. Unlike war and famine, it could not have been prevented. We're sorry they died, but we're also sorry for the thousands of others who die each day.

News

Valentine's Day

Calendar of Events

To Skippy:

Some cars are red, some cars are blue.
Your car is a toilet, but we still love you.
Thumper and Bambi

To Mel:

There is a guy named Mel
Who most don't know very well
His help is so grand
Let's all give a hand
To the man in AV who is swell
Your Fans

To my Babzy:

To the bestest valentine
what I eber nude!!
Love, Skippy

To John:

Roses are red, violets are blue
Valentine's Day was designed
just for you. Just remember, if
you need any I.C. you know
where to come!
Love, Jill

To Bobby Joe:

I'm in love with the vessel
the Potter's creating you to be!
Jill

To the cute guy who put in my
nickle:
I kept the copy. Want to be
mine?

To Sarah:

Happy Valentine's Day. I
love you.
T. W.

To Frank:

Happy Valentine's Day.
Good luck at regionals. Love
ya Babes!
A.

This week, Feb. 10-14, is Sexual Awareness week, and is the subject of a series of ASG sponsored events.

Monday, Feb. 10 kicks off Sexual Awareness Week with "What Every Man Should Know About Birth Control," a presentation by Dr. Ronald Powell in the Community Center's small dining room, from 11:00 am to noon. Also on Feb. 10 will be the Mr. and Mrs. Legs contest from noon to 1:00 pm in the CC Mall.

Tuesday, Feb. 11, Sexual Awareness Week continues with an open forum, "Dating in the Eighties," with Student Program Specialist, Paul Kylo, serving as moderator, in this ASG version of "Town Hall." Following the forum, which takes place at 11:30 am to 12:30 pm, Pat Krum and Erna Lewis, of the College's nursing department will speak on "What Every Woman Should Know About Birth Control," in the small dining room from 1:00pm to 2:00 pm.

Wednesday, Feb. 12, we have the ASG/Red Cross Blood Drive, which will be held in the Community Center from 9:00am to 2:00 pm. Also on this date, a Red Cross spokesperson will speak on AIDS, also in the Community Center from noon to 12:30pm.

Thursday, Feb. 13 "What You Don't Know Can Hurt You," a presentation on sexually transmitted diseases will be conducted by public health specialists, Robert and Marcie Gowan, in P104 from noon to 1:00pm.

Friday, Feb. 14, we have the climax of Sexual Awareness Week, in which students will play ASG's own version of "The Dating Game," with ASG Vice-President, Shawn Watterberg, acting as host.

Come one, come all, to the Sadie Hawkins Dance. There will be a social hour from 8:00 to 9:00 pm. The dance will begin at 9:00 pm and last until 1:00am. Top 40 and Swing music will be performed live by "Swing Shift". Cost is \$3 single, and \$5 couples.

Feb. 19, Wednesday. James Hersch, songwriter/guitarist/vocalist, will perform from noon to 1:00pm in the CC Mall.

Feb. 21, Friday. The Family Night Movie will be "Terminator." There will be two showings. The first will be from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm in McLoughlin Theatre, and the second from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. will be held in the CC Mall.

Feb. 26, Wednesday. ASG will hold an open forum with the student body in the Community Center from noon to 1:00 pm.

