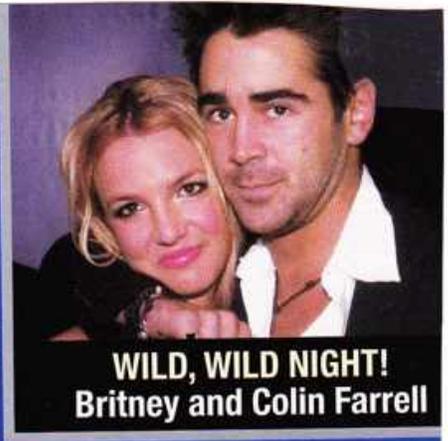


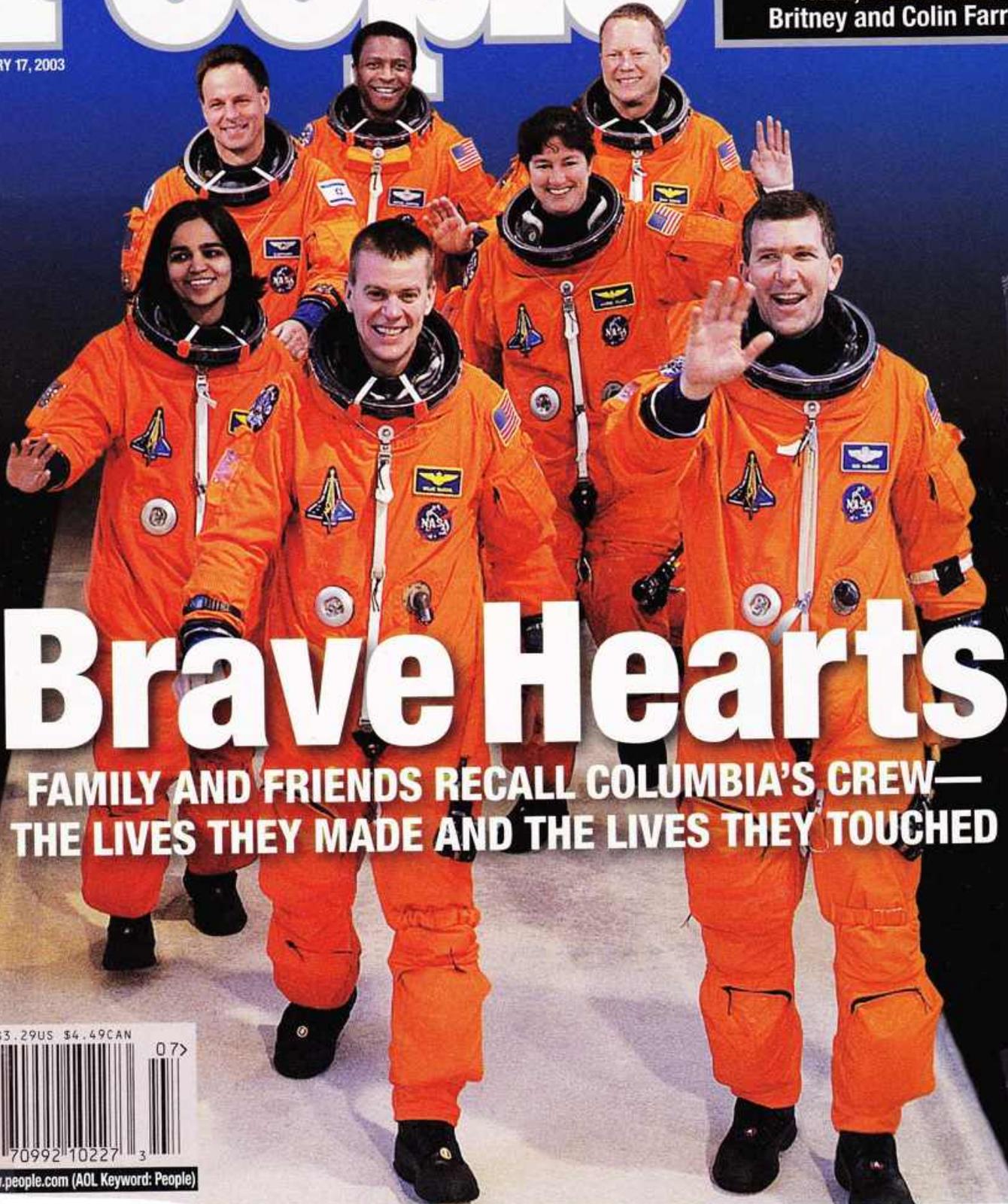
A Bizarre L.A. Murder: Inside the Phil Spector Case

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"We will all miss him terribly," says brother Keith of Rick (with wife Evelyn, Laura and Matthew in '99).

RICK HUSBAND, 45

Mission commander, married, father of two

The memory of Rick Husband brings tears to the eyes of his younger brother Keith. Tears of sorrow, of course, but also tears of joy. "I'd pester him when we were little kids, but we loved each other dearly," says Keith, who was looking forward to having Rick serve as best man at his wedding in April.

Keith still vividly recalls a day soon after Rick got his pilot's license at age 17. The brothers hopped in a Cessna and took wing from the small airstrip in Amarillo, Texas, where Rick had learned to fly. "We took off, did some turns and flew over our house," recalls Keith, 42, himself now a pilot for America West Airlines. "Rick was beaming and I was giggling. It was a great day."

In the years that followed, that enthusiasm only grew. After graduating from Texas Tech University, Husband joined the Air Force, first establishing himself as a superb fighter jock, then as a test pilot. In 1994 he realized a life-long dream and was selected as an astronaut candidate. His first mission into space was in 1999, when he served as the pilot of the shuttle *Discovery*. If his duties ever put a strain on his family, it never showed, especially not in his wife of

20 years, Evelyn, 44, who had attended Amarillo High School with him. "I knew exactly who I was marrying—a pilot who might one day become an astronaut," Evelyn once told a friend. "And I'm thrilled for him."

For all Husband's love of technology and machinery, what really catches in the minds of those who knew him best was how he related to other people. When talking to his own children—Laura, 12, and Matthew, 7—he would kneel down, the better to address them at eye level. At Halloween he would dress up in his space suit and pose endlessly for pictures with kids at Grace Community Church, where he worshipped, in Clear Lake City southeast of Houston.

Keith last saw his brother on Jan. 14, two days before the launch, at a NASA barbecue. "Rick and the crew were really pumped up," Keith says, "yet they were relaxed at the same time. You'd have never guessed that in two days, these same seven were going to strap on a rocket and go off into space—putting their lives on the line."

Now for Keith the only consolation is that he can see a reflection of his brother in his kids, who above all seem to have inherited their father's gentle strength. Right after the tragedy, Keith says, Laura whispered to his fiancée not to worry about them. "God will take care of us," said the youngster.