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**SCIENCE CHANNEL'S FIRST DRAMATIC FEATURE FILM, *THE CHALLENGER DISASTER*,
STARRING AWARD-WINNING ACTORS WILLIAM HURT, BRUCE GREENWOOD AND BRIAN DENNEHY
DEBUTS THIS NOVEMBER**

--THE CHALLENGER DISASTER Premieres Saturday, November 16 at 9 PM ET/PT on Science Channel--

*--Companion Documentary About the Life of Dr. Richard Feynman and Narrated by Bruce Greenwood to
World Premiere on Monday, November 18 at 10 PM ET/PT--*

(Silver Spring, Md.) – Americans sat in stunned silence on the morning of January 28, 1986, as the Space Shuttle Challenger tragically exploded in the clear blue sky over Cape Canaveral, Fla. Just 73 seconds into Challenger's 10th mission America's dreams of reaching beyond earth suffered a horrific setback. In the months following a special Presidential Commission worked to determine the explosion's cause in the hopes of making future spaceflight missions safer. Of the 14 commission members from the domains of NASA, the military and other affiliated organizations, one person stood apart as an independent voice—Nobel Prize winning scientist Dr. Richard Feynman.

Science Channel's first dramatic feature film **THE CHALLENGER DISASTER**, premiering **Saturday, November 16 from 9-11 PM ET/PT**, is the riveting story of Dr. Feynman's role on the Presidential Commission. Based upon Feynman's book "What Do You Care Other People Think?", **THE CHALLENGER DISASTER** chronicles Feynman's efforts to uncover the cause of the Challenger explosion by deftly navigating the many vested interests represented on the commission, and his ability to quickly learn everything about the vast complexity of the space shuttle.

"This film is the biggest swing in our network's history. As our first fictional drama **THE CHALLENGER DISASTER** furthers our commitment to bring audiences programming that provokes thought," said

Debbie Myers, general manager and executive vice president of Science Channel. “We’re telling the side of the Challenger story that isn’t well-known while showing that science is a fascinating, rich, alive world. Our hope is that the audience walks away appreciating the genius of Dr. Feynman and the impact of his accomplishments.”

Feynman was chosen by William Robert Graham, one of his former students and NASA’s acting administrator, to lend his skills to the commission. Reluctant to participate Feynman followed his scientific instincts during the investigation unafraid of raising questions in the face of pressure from several commission members. With unwavering persistence he employed exceptional integrity and scientific logic to determine that two of the shuttle’s O-rings failed during launch. In a famous televised hearing Feynman demonstrated that the O-ring was not as pliable as previously thought by submerging a piece of the O-ring in a glass of ice water. At the investigation’s conclusion Feynman produced an essential report, “Appendix F – Personal Observations on the Reliability of the Shuttle”, that was presented to President Reagan independent of the commission’s report.

Co-produced by the BBC, **THE CHALLENGER DISASTER** features powerful performances from an all-star cast that is headlined by Academy Award-winning actor William Hurt (“Altered States”, “Kiss of the Spider Woman”, “Children of a Lesser God”, “History of Violence”, “Into the Wild”, “Too Big To Fail”) as the brilliant physicist Dr. Richard Feynman. Joining Hurt are Canadian actor Bruce Greenwood (“Thirteen Days”, “Star Trek”, “Super 8”, “I, Robot”) who plays fellow Commissioner U.S. Air Force General Donald Kutyna in the second lead role. He is joined by American actor Brian Dennehy (“First Blood”, “The Belly of an Architect”, “Bunker Hill”, “Twelfth Night”) as William Rogers, Chairman of the Presidential Commission, English actress Joanne Whalley (“The Singing Detective”, “Edge of Darkness”, “The Virgin Queen”, “The Borgias”) who plays Feynman’s wife Gweneth, and Eve Best (“The King’s Speech”, “Nurse Jackie”, “The Shadow Line”, “Shackleton”) as astronaut Sally Ride.

As a companion to the fictional drama **THE CHALLENGER DISASTER** Science Channel is airing **FEYNMAN: THE CHALLENGER** on **Monday, November 18 at 10 PM ET/PT**. This special one hour documentary, narrated by Bruce Greenwood, examines the remarkable life of Dr. Richard Feynman including his work on the Challenger and his role in The Manhattan Project, a U.S. government backed program that operated during the 1940s and led to the creation of the first atomic bombs.

Facts About The Space Shuttle Challenger (Mission STS-51-L):

- The Challenger exploded 73 seconds into its 10th mission, and was the 25th shuttle mission overall.
- Seven crew members lost their lives including: Teacher-in-Space payload specialist Sharon Christa McAuliffe; payload specialist Gregory Jarvis; and astronauts Judith A. Resnik, mission specialist; Francis R. (Dick) Scobee, mission commander; Ronald E. McNair, mission specialist; Mike J. Smith, pilot; and Ellison S. Onizuka, mission specialist.
- McAuliffe was a social studies teacher from Concord, N.H., who had been chosen from nearly 12,000 teachers nationwide to travel in space.
- McAuliffe was part of President Reagan's Teacher in Space Project. She was going to conduct experiments and teach lessons from space that would be broadcast to schoolchildren across the U.S.
- Challenger was named after the British Naval research vessel HMS Challenger that sailed the Atlantic and Pacific oceans during the 1870s.
- Challenger was the second operational shuttle and made its first flight, STS-6, on April 4, 1983.

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THE CHALLENGER DISASTER was co-produced by the BBC. For the BBC, Mark Hedgecoe ("Operation Iceberg" and "How to Grow A Planet", "Rome: The Rise And Fall Of An Empire") and Cassian Harrison ("Earthflight", "First Light") are executive producers, and Laurie Borg ("Great Expectations", "Made in Dagenham", "Sense and Sensibility", "Occupation") is producer. James Hawes ("Enid", "Suspensions of Mister Whicher", "Mad Dogs", "Doctor Who", "Fanny Hill") is director and the script is by Kate Gartside ("Mistresses", "Lillies" and "Lark Rise To Candleford", "Stopping Distance").

For Science Channel, Rocky Collins (**DARK MATTERS: TWISTED BUT TRUE, ALIEN ENCOUNTERS**) is executive producer, Lindsey Foster is coordinating producer, Bernadette McDaid is Vice President of Production, and Deborah Adler Myers is General Manager and Executive Vice President.

About Science Channel

Science Channel, a division of Discovery Communications, Inc. (Nasdaq: DISCA, DISCB, DISCK), is home for the thought provocateur, the individual who is unafraid to ask the killer questions of "how" and "why not." The network is a playground for those with audacious intellects and features programming willing to go beyond imagination to explore the unknown. Guided by curiosity, Science Channel looks for innovation in mysterious new worlds as well as in its own backyard. Science Channel and the Science

Channel HD simulcast reach more than nearly 80 million U.S. households. The network also features high-traffic online and social media destinations, including ScienceChannel.com, [facebook.com/Science Channel](https://facebook.com/ScienceChannel) and [twitter.com/Science Channel](https://twitter.com/ScienceChannel).

About Discovery Communications

Discovery Communications (Nasdaq: DISCA, DISCB, DISCK) is the world's #1 nonfiction media company reaching more than 1.8 billion cumulative subscribers in 223 countries and territories. Discovery is dedicated to satisfying curiosity through 162 worldwide television networks, led by Discovery Channel, TLC, Animal Planet, Science and Investigation Discovery, as well as U.S. joint venture networks OWN: Oprah Winfrey Network, The Hub and 3net, the first 24-hour 3D network. Across the Nordic region, Discovery owns and operates SBS Discovery Media, a top-three portfolio of 20 television brands that feature leading nonfiction content, as well as locally produced entertainment programs, sports and the best scripted series and movies from major studios. Discovery also is a leading provider of educational products and services to schools and owns and operates a diversified portfolio of digital media services, including Revision3. For more information, please visit www.discoverycommunications.com.

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