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Calculated Risk: The Supersonic Life and Times of Gus Grissom

George Leopold

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During the 1960s, the Cold War was fought on many fronts and fields of battle—nuclear weapon technology, Cuba and other geopolitical hotspots, the Olympic Games, to name a few—but the race to space may have meant the most to Russian and American egos, and astronaut Gus Grissom played a leading role until his death by fire on a Cape Canaveral launch pad in 1967. An engineer and test pilot, Grissom fully understood the risks and complexity of space flight, and his expertise assured his involvement in all facets of the Gemini program, including the design decisions that cost his life. Through interviews with dozens of Grissom's NASA coworkers, friends, and family, this highly recommended biography offers an astronaut's-eye view of early spaceflight and Cold War intrigue.

MATT SUTHERLAND (Fall 2016)

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