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Sommario/riassunto	Unofficially they called themselves the TFNG, or the Thirty-Five New Guys. Officially, they were NASA's Group 8 astronauts, selected in January 1978 to train for orbital missions aboard the Space Shuttle.

Prior to this time only pilots or scientists trained as pilots had been assigned to fly on America's spacecraft, but with the advent of the innovative winged spacecraft the door was finally opened to non-pilots, including women and minorities. In all, 15 of those selected were categorised as Pilot Astronauts, while the other 20 would train under the new designation of Mission Specialist. Altogether, the Group 8 astronauts would be launched on a total of 103 space missions; some flying only once, while others flew into orbit as many as five times. Sadly, four of their number would perish in the Challenger tragedy in January 1986. In their latest collaborative effort, the authors bring to life the amazing story behind the selection of the first group of Space Shuttle astronauts, examining their varied backgrounds and many accomplishments in a fresh and accessible way through deep research and revealing interviews. Throughout its remarkable 30-year history as the workhorse of NASA's human spaceflight exploration, twice halted through tragedy, the Shuttle fleet performed with magnificence. So too did these 35 men and women, swept up in the dynamic thrust and ongoing development of America's Space Shuttle program. This book on the Group 8 Astronauts, the TFNGs, is an excellent summation of the individuals first selected for the new Space Shuttle Program. It provides insight into what it took to first get the Space Shuttle flying. For any space enthusiast it is a must read. Robert L. Crippen PLT on STS-1 .
