John D. Anderson, Jr., was born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, on October 1, 1937. He attended the University of Florida, graduating in 1959 with high honors and a bachelor of aeronautical engineering degree. From 1959 to 1962, he was a lieutenant and task scientist at the Aerospace Research Laboratory at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. From 1962 to 1966, he attended the Ohio State University under the National Science Foundation and NASA Fellowships, graduating with a Ph.D. in aeronautical and astronautical engineering. In 1966, he joined the U.S. Naval Ordnance Laboratory as Chief of the Hypersonics Group. In 1973, he became Chairman of the Department of Aerospace Engineering at the University of Maryland, and since 1980 has been professor of Aerospace Engineering at the University of Maryland. In 1982, he was designated a Distinguished Scholar/Teacher by the University. During 1986–1987, while on sabbatical from the University, Dr. Anderson occupied the Charles Lindbergh Chair at the National Air and Space Museum of the Smithsonian Institution. He continued with the Air and Space Museum one day each week as their Special Assistant for Aerodynamics, doing research and writing on the history of aerodynamics. In addition to his position as professor of aerospace engineering, in 1993, he was made a full faculty member of the Committee for the History and Philosophy of Science and in 1996 an affiliate member of the History Department at the University of Maryland. In 1996, he became the Glenn L. Martin Distinguished Professor for Education in Aerospace Engineering. In 1999, he retired from the University of Maryland and was appointed Professor Emeritus. He is currently the Curator for Aerodynamics at the National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Dr. Anderson has published ten books: Gasdynamic Lasers: An Introduction, Academic Press (1976), and under McGraw-Hill, Introduction to Flight (1978, 1984, 1989, 2000, 2005), Modern Compressible Flow (1982, 1990, 2003), Fundamentals of Aerodynamics (1984, 1991, 2001), Hypersonic and High Temperature Gas Dynamics (1989), Computational Fluid Dynamics: The Basics with Applications (1995), Aircraft Performance and Design (1999), A History of Aerodynamics and Its Impact on Flying Machines, Cambridge University Press (1997 hardback, 1998 paperback), The Airplane: A History of Its Technology, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (2003), and Inventing Flight, Johns Hopkins University Press (2004). He is the author of over 120 papers on radiative gasdynamics, reentry aerothermodynamics, gasdynamic and chemical lasers, computational fluid dynamics, applied aerodynamics, hypersonic flow, and the history of aeronautics. Dr. Anderson is in Who's Who in America. He is an Honorary Fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA). He is also a fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society, London. He is a member of Tau Beta Pi, Sigma Tau, Phi Kappa Phi, Phi Eta Sigma, The American

Society for Engineering Education, the History of Science Society, and the Society for the History of Technology. In 1988, he was elected as Vice President of the AIAA for Education. In 1989, he was awarded the John Leland Atwood Award jointly by the American Society for Engineering Education and the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics "for the lasting influence of his recent contributions to aerospace engineering education." In 1995, he was awarded the AIAA Pendray Aerospace Literature Award "for writing undergraduate and graduate textbooks in aerospace engineering which have received worldwide acclaim for their readability and clarity of presentation, including historical content." In 1996, he was elected Vice President of the AIAA for Publications. He has recently been honored by the AIAA with its 2000 von Karman Lectureship in Astronautics.

From 1987 to the present, Dr. Anderson has been the senior consulting editor on the McGraw-Hill Series in Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering.