The Economics of Aging presents results from an ongoing National Bureau of Economic Research project. Contributors consider the housing mobility and living arrangements of the elderly, their labor force participation and retirement, the economics of their health care, and their financial status. The goal of the research is to further our understanding both of the factors that determine the well-being of the elderly and of the consequences that follow from an increasingly older population with longer individual life spans. Each paper is accompanied by critical commentary.

Jonathan Feinstein and Daniel McFadden find that wealthier households are less likely to move than poorer households and that changes in family composition or retirement status increase the likelihood of moving. After studying the housing wealth of high- and low-income families, Steven F. Venti and David A. Wise conclude that reverse mortgage annuities are likely to increase the income of the poor elderly. Konrad Stahl, comparing housing mobility patterns of the elderly in the United States and West Germany, finds that moving is associated with substantial increases in the ratio of housing costs to income in both countries. Axel Börsch-Supan studies the economic and demographic determinants of the decision to live independently.

Laurence J. Kotlikoff and John Morris present the findings of a new survey of extended families in Massachusetts that suggest that a significant minority of the elderly in need of assistance either have no children or receive little care from their children. Laurence J. Kotlikoff and David A. Wise describe the pension plan of a typical large firm, which provides strong incentives to retire at age

(Continued on back flap)
The Economics of Aging
DAVID A. WISE is the John F. Stambaugh Professor of Political Economy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.

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(Resolution adopted October 25, 1926, as revised through September 30, 1974)
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David A. Wise