ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF AGING AND RETIREMENT**

1. General


Topics explored in this volume include: future dependency ratios and their implications; alternatives to traditional retirement (e.g. retiring later, job re-training, part-time work, and gradual retirement) and their effects; "income-in-kind" from health care and social services; pensions, social security, and the costs to society of providing retirement income. The collection of articles suggests adoption of policies designed to make it both possible and appealing for more older people to remain in the work force, thus holding down cost increases and, for some, enhancing lifestyles.


This review highlights the most important areas of research in the literature on aging. Among these: the determinants of population age structure changes and their impact on the size and composition of the dependent groups; the economic status of the elderly and income sources in old age; incorporation of the economic characteristics of the elderly into a life-cycle context; labor supply decisions of the elderly; social security and private pensions and their influence on the economy; and the interaction between aging and macro-economic variables.


* Specific works on pensions and social security are excluded from this bibliography and will be covered in a future Selected References.
** Items from this list should be ordered directly from the publisher. Addresses are given in connection with each reference.

This book addresses the problem of constructing a useful gauge of poverty for the aged, and it considers the role social security should play in providing for the poor. The effects of government on work, retirement, private pension participation, and saving for old age are examined.


The essays contained in this volume call attention to recent developments affecting the patterns of work and earnings throughout the lifespan, recent and projected growth of nonworking time, levels of income by age and occupational groups, the impact of economic growth on retirement benefits, the question of optimizing the temporal allocation of work and income, and the growing role of transfers.


Reimers uses labor force participation rates and population data to demonstrate that trends in labor force participation of older men and in average retirement age need not move in the same direction. The “conditional mean retirement age” of American men is found to have been stable around age 65, while the variance of retirement age has decreased over time.


The article focuses on men age 60 and over who continue to work. It examines: the labor force participation rates of this group (the rates have decreased sharply during the past two decades); the percentage of part-timers (it’s grown); self-employment (far more likely for older men than for younger men); distribution by industry and occupation; and mandatory retirement.


The authors present a variety of projections concerning population change and the cost burden of increased numbers of non-working older persons over the next few decades. The book examines recent develop-
ments in biomedical and gerontological research, the implications of the energy and resources issues, and of productivity changes.


Schulz contends that misconceptions abound regarding the economics of aging. He argues that: "most aged are not poor; they are not the group most seriously hurt by inflation; they have not been forced to retire." The author examines: problems of measurement; effects of demographic shifts; employment and adjustment problems faced by the elderly; the societal and individual implications of early retirement; and the development of useful policies.

2. MANDATORY RETIREMENT


This publication includes an explanation and text of the 1978 Age Discrimination Act Amendments, a report of Congressional "Committee of Conference" on the matter, and reports by the House Labor Committee and the Senate Human Resources Committee. Cost estimates are included.


The author describes the nature and development of recent legislation which extended protection against age discrimination in employment to persons up to age seventy. He poses both the case against and the case for mandatory retirement. Macdonald analyzes the effect of the law on the labor force and employment.


The paper reports the results of a questionnaire to which 400 companies responded. The author concluded that the findings underscore a marked liberalization in top management's attitudes towards mandatory retirement, but that "taken as a whole, top management clearly favors mandatory retirement." Among the other conclusions: mandatory retirement is not as widespread as may generally be believed.

Ave.). 1978. 15 pp. (Information Bulletin no. 46). $3.00, Associate & Educational; $9.00, Non-Associate.

This paper is based on 41 business executives’ responses to questions about: the expected impact of the law on retirements and key aspects of work force management; employee benefits for those who work past 65; and strategies that might be applied to problems resulting from new rules. The managerial view is stressed.


Wallfisch looks at the law’s background; highlights of the new law; and the law’s implications for the workforce, benefit plans and personnel policy.


Seven sections comprise the hearings: the historical setting; the law on age discrimination; impact of retirement on people (physical, psychological, economic, social, etc.), arguments for and against; conclusions and recommendations for policy. The committee recommended raising the upper age limits for mandatory retirement.

3. Early Retirement


The authors of this massive study report that the major finding derived from both national and auto worker sample data is that “financial factors—primarily expected retirement income—are of principle importance in the retirement decision, with attitudinal variables having less influence, though usually operating in expected directions. There was a threshold level of retirement income which most people seem to consider necessary to insure a reasonably adequate post-retirement living standard.”


Kleiber looks at the social and economic costs of maintaining a growing percentage of early retirees on public and pension programs. He also examines a new trend—the working retiree, who receives a pension from one job and a paycheck from another.