This paper is a survey article that discusses what was known about the economics of internal US migration as of about 1975. The paper considers such topics as the determinants and consequences of interregional migration and attempts to ascertain the state of knowledge concerning migration research, as well as fruitful directions for future research. [The SSCI® indicates that this paper has been cited in over 220 publications, making it the most-cited paper from this journal.]

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For many years migration was an important topic of research in disciplines like sociology and geography. After the publication in 1961 of T.W. Schultz's1 classic paper in the American Economic Review, soon followed in 1962 by G.S. Becker's2 paper on investment in human capital and, in the same special issue of the Journal of Political Economy, by L.A. Sjaastad's3 paper on migration as an investment in human capital, migration research by economists really began to blossom.

The human capital perspective provided a paradigm that caught the attention of economists during the last 10 to 15 years, and migration research has followed this trend. Several important findings have depended upon the use of micro data and the development of techniques to analyze such data provided an important impetus to the rejuvenation of labor economics during the last 10 to 15 years, and migration research has followed this trend. Several important findings have depended upon the use of micro and panel data.

Perhaps one reason for the popularity of my article is that migration research is now common in several disciplines, and as the thrust and tone of published migration research has changed, many scholars wish to reference the "basics." My paper did, I think, lay out these basics as they existed in 1975. Having read it recently, I have since updated the article by surveying the literature that appeared roughly between 1975 and 1985.4