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## Peter Danner 1921-2008

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## Peter Danner, 1921-2008.

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Peter Danner was Professor of Economics at Marquette University from 1961 to 1986, retiring as Professor Emeritus. He was a past president of the Association for Social Economics and briefly an editor of the ***Review of Social Economy***. In 1989 he received the Thomas J. Divine, S.J. Award for lifetime achievement from the Association. [1] He was the author of numerous articles and published four books, including *Getting and Spending: A Primer on Economic Morality* (Sheed & Ward, 1994) and *The Economic Person: Acting and Analyzing* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2002).

Danner was strongly influenced by Bernard J. Dempsey, S.J., who he regarded as his mentor at Saint Louis University, and who for him "was the first to resolve conflicts between fundamental ethical and economic principles and to introduce me to the economic wisdom of Joseph A. Schumpeter, his own mentor at Harvard" (*The Economic Person*, p. xiii). [2] Personalist economics takes the person as the primary focus of economics, but departs from the traditional *Homo economicus* gain-seeking conception in representing individuals more fully as motivated by social and spiritual values and living in community with others. Danner drew on the thinking of

Emmanuel Mounier, the French founder of the personalist movement, [3] John Paul II, and the thinking of the classical Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle in their emphasis on the common good. He believed that the virtues of moderation, justice, and generosity should be practiced to offset gain-seeking as an exclusive concern, and to provide a basis for cooperation between people. In this respect he was in close agreement with William Waters, for many years the editor of the *Review* at DePaul University, who was also influenced by Aristotle, as well as Schumpeter. An introduction to Danner's thinking can be found in his 1982 ***Review of Social Economy*** article, "Personalism, Values and Economic Values." A *festschrift* to honor Danner is being organized by Edward J. O'Boyle.

## Footnotes

1. *Divine was one of the founders of the Association – until 1970 the Catholic Economic Association – the first president of the Association, and the first editor-in-chief of the **Review of Social Economy**.*
2. *Dempsey was also a founder of the Association and early editor of the Review.*
3. *Mounier said that the personalist movement originated in the crisis which began with the Wall Street crash in 1929.*