

## **Theme Issue: Present at the Creation**

This issue's articles and essays offer an extended discussion of an important but neglected event in the development of economic and social thought—an event that still shapes the work of virtually all working economists.

Many economists will have been taught that modern marginal analysis seems to have emerged independently yet virtually simultaneously in three places in the 1870s. But few will be conversant about the succeeding generation's social-analysis trifecta—three agenda-setting works from the 1890s. Alfred Marshall's *Principles* codified and directed neoclassical analysis and policy for generations; Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* launched modern Roman Catholic social teaching; and Abraham Kuyper's Stone lectures and other writings set the course for Reformed Christian social teaching in the succeeding century. These three approaches have had disproportionate influence in social analysis ever since.

Economists, particularly economists of faith, should be able to intelligently discuss all three, and able to discuss them in relation to each other. Why did these three emerge simultaneously? What questions and problems were they addressing? To what extent did each succeed? Were the three in conversation with each other? What opportunities for cross-pollination have been pursued, and what opportunities remain?

This issue of *Faith and Economics* offers a full article on each of these three movements, with two essays discussing the contributions of the lead articles. The article section closes with a forward-looking article that suggests strategies for bringing the work of economists and theologians into fruitful conversation.

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