

The Edge of Words: God and the Habits of Language. By Rowan Williams. London: Bloomsbury, 2014. Pp. xiii + 204. \$23.99.

This product of Williams's 2013 Gifford Lectures approaches natural theology by examining the properties of human speech, more specifically, representative language, which attempts "to embody, translate, make present or re-form what is perceived" (22). W. points to the open-ended character of representative language, including its capacity for erroneous and fictional expressions, as a signpost to the possible "hinterland of meaning"—the ground of intelligibility that eludes yet provides the basis for our comprehension (173). Special illustrations of the creative horizons of language appear in chapters devoted to "excessive language" (e.g., poetry and dystopic fiction) and to silence, which expresses the gap between our experience and our abilities to articulate that experience. W. offers this reflection on language, not as a proof for the existence of God, but to draw the reader's attention to a paradox of human existence consistent with revelation.

One of the most striking aspects of W.'s argument concerns the material character of language. The starting point for his analysis of language as embodied is Phoebe Caldwell's description of her work with autistic persons; those interested in disability ethics will find chapter 4 particularly intriguing. W. insists that a focus on language must not lead to a denigration of the physical. "The material world we inhabit as material speakers," he argues, "not only produces makers of its own image but produces makers of alternative worlds: matter, so far from being dead or passive, 'proposes' its own transformation" (123). Such an embodied natural theology of language, therefore, raises important questions for both systematic theology and environmental ethics.

With its exceptionally broad range of dialogue partners (e.g., in literature and science as well as in classical and contemporary philosophy and theology), W.'s brief and elegantly written volume will serve professionals and graduate students or advanced undergraduates in theology/philosophy, as well as the educated reader interested in natural theology or in the philosophy of language.

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No Turning Back: The Future of Ecumenism. By Margaret O'Gara. Edited by Michael Vertin. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2014. Pp. xxvi + 253. \$29.95.

This is a work of love: Margaret O'Gara's love for the ecumenical movement to which she dedicated the majority of her scholarly work, and the love of Michael Vertin, her husband, who brought this collection, begun by O'Gara, to publication. It is also a work of immense scholarly erudition. Much of O'G.'s work was done in response to specific topics that arose in the many ecumenical dialogues in which she played a leading role. It is a great service to bring them together. This volume continues and amplifies the mutual gift theme of her first volume, *The Ecumenical Gift Exchange* (1998).