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Two challenges in particular caught my attention and perhaps warranted further exploration. First, as many of the authors note, in the Canadian context, globalization largely means Americanization – and there seems to be an assumption that this is bad. Second, the concerns of the contributors to safeguard Canadian identity often seem to reflect a concern to protect Canadian industry. Like my inadequate explanation of ‘Canadianness’ outlined above, the book does not define what it means by Canadian identity, either assuming that as Canadians we will know, or presuming that, in a global context, it is ‘not Americanness’ – neither of which is satisfactory in a book that specifically addresses Canadian identity.

Many of the contributors write about Canadian identity (and its relationship to cultural industries) as if it had a definite form, and yet the vastness of our geography, our bilingual heritage, the patterns of immigration, and the size of our population mean that Canadian identity is shifting, fragmented, and diffuse. Governmental policies such as regulations on Canadian content or limits on foreign ownership do not protect Canadian identity; rather, they protect Canadian cultural industries that may be threatened in an increasingly globalized media world.

In his introduction, editor David Taras identifies four themes that occur throughout the book (Americanization, global governance, digital globalization, and corporate concentration), and they are an accurate description of the main subject areas of the contributors. More importantly, though, he writes,

[I]f there is a dividing line within this collection it is between optimists and pessimists. The optimists believe that Canada has all of the tools that it needs to create its own cultural space . . . . The pessimists . . . argue that Canada has few levers with which to control the onrushing tide of media change.

With few exceptions (e.g., Dornan’s contribution on foreign ownership), the contributors rarely stray from their optimistic or pessimistic perspectives, seeming to forget that threats often bring with them opportunities and that the unstable nature of Canadian identity may actually thrive in a context of globalization where the local is thrown into sharp relief against the global. (SARA-JANE FINLAY)

Thomas Mathien and D.G. Wright, editors.  
*Autobiography as Philosophy:*  
*The Philosophical Uses of Self-Presentation*  
 Routledge 2006. x, 278. US \$140.00

From its title alone, it would be difficult to judge how many *UTQ* readers might be interested in this edited volume. It is perhaps not unreasonable

to assume that a collection of philosophy essays coming from Toronto would be written for – and for the most part, by – analytic philosophers who have in mind a particular understanding of ‘philosophy.’ Already certain of what philosophy is, we might expect them to enumerate the clear and distinct conditions under which autobiography will count ‘as philosophy,’ if ever it does. In their introduction, however, the editors take aim at this narrow conception of philosophy:

The writing of philosophy is now measured by professional standards. Those standards specify that, even where a text is not yet presented in a clear, impersonal and argumentative form, it should, in principle, be translatable into one . . . . [T]here are canons, instructions in their use, and the constant pressure of professional publication as an enforcement mechanism.

This is one of the more critical passages, but it suggests that contemporary conventions of professional philosophy might not lend themselves to a fair discussion of autobiographical writing. Must autobiography obey the idiomatic and argumentative forms of analytic philosophy if it is to be deemed philosophical? Is autobiography an epistemological enterprise? Could it be ‘translated’ into something abstract and impersonal? The answer is a guarded no.

While many such collections are criticized for a lack of cohesion among the essays, it is just this tension that energizes the volume and makes it interesting. The essays take their positions within a debate over what counts as philosophy and, for that matter, autobiography. If philosophers presume a distinction between fact and fiction, this border becomes troubled and contested. What, for instance, is the self and its relation to the language in which that self finds (self-)expression? Is the writing necessarily intentional and transparent, or do we agree with Hume who, as Donald Ainslie writes, ‘denies that we have special control over or insight into ourselves?’ How, then, will the self relate to itself and to others? In what terms will that self-relation take place – in philosophical terms, through literary discourse, metaphor, allegory, and other rhetorical figures? Moreover, how – by whose terms – shall we judge how these myriad approaches should relate? Does philosophy have the final word? This is an old quarrel between the Sophists and philosophy, and it might be difficult to persuade most philosophers of ‘the primacy of rhetoric in the pursuit of truth,’ as Domenico Pietropaolo puts it in his chapter on Vico.

The two editors themselves seem at odds in their contributions. Mathien enumerates several ‘communicative purposes’ of autobiography, each of which qualifies autobiography as ‘philosophical’ (note the diminutive adjectival form): confession, example, apology, consolation, and (more vaguely still) as an inquiry into human nature. Presumably, each of the collection’s

essays could be categorized accordingly. Meanwhile, Wright offers two tremendously nuanced and well-researched chapters, one on Montaigne, the other on Nietzsche. The essay on Montaigne is a study on the rhetorics of autobiographical vanity: how Montaigne steers a course between a vanity that would be distasteful to his reader, on the one hand, and excessive modesty, which would have little to recommend him to his reader, on the other. Fortunately, this essay departs from philosophical conventions to look at language and tone, asking how the autobiographer achieves a self-presentation that is neither too high nor too low. Giving an account of oneself is, then, a rhetorical matter. Confession can be a false display of 'humility,' for instance. Wright's essay on Nietzsche is equally fine and should have wide appeal not just to Nietzsche scholars, but to literary critics and historians. Wright emphasizes the rhetorical conditions under which autobiography is produced: 'Memory is unreliable, sincerity impossible to establish, language distorting, and the holy trinity of autobiographical persons – author, narrator, and protagonist – can seemingly never be made into One.' Here is some grist for the philosopher's mill, assuming she or he has read this far.

Although the essays in the volume are written by contemporary academics, the random congeries of authors they discuss are all long dead: Augustine, Abelard, Montaigne, Descartes, Vico, Hume, Rousseau, Newman, Mill, Nietzsche, Collingwood, and most recently, Russell. Incidentally, it is only the last who is presented as rejecting outright the possibility of 'philosophical' autobiography. Some readers may find many of these dead authors (all men, almost all white) somewhat uninspiring; but perhaps what is of greater interest is the manner in which each is treated, from life to text. My criticism of this collection is that none of the contributors discuss the compelling work in this field that has been done in the Continental tradition – starting with Foucault or Barthes, for instance – or the ways in which contemporary feminist philosophers and literary critics have taken up these issues, including Judith Butler, Adriana Cavarero, Hélène Cixous, and Denise Riley, to name a few. Thus, while the editors might guardedly refuse to capitulate to the conventions of professional philosophy, they also refuse to refuse these conventions outright. And this position might be wise, if the volume is destined for analytic philosophers for whom Continental treatments – and there are a good number of them – will prove unpersuasive.

While this collection admirably draws out some of the rhetorical stakes in the project of life-writing, it might appeal best to the reader who is not overly polarized by the analytic/Continental divide. Although the 'philosophy' announced in the title both provokes and misleads, I suspect that any mention of 'rhetoric' here would be less marketable, and we must take seriously not only the requirements of 'professional publication as

an enforcement mechanism,' but also the ways the borders of philosophy are patrolled. (STUART J. MURRAY)

Eleanor Cook. *Enigmas and Riddles in Literature*  
Cambridge University Press 2006. xx, 292. US\$80.00

This is an extraordinary book. Its scholarship is dense and wide-ranging (over eras, literatures, countries, languages), its conceptual and theoretical frame and focus are developed carefully and precisely, and (what makes it extraordinary) its evocation of the many poems and texts it speaks to and through is light and clear and illuminating (despite the density of the scholarship surrounding them). One way of describing this fascinating book is to say that its 290 pages unpack the pun implicit in the etymologically unrelated Greek and Latin words for riddle (*griphus*) and for griffin (*gryps*, *gryphus*) by way of the sphinx (hybrid like the griffin and given to riddles, or more exactly, enigmas) and of Paul, I Corinthians 13:12 ('now I see through a glass darkly,' the King James translation of *in aenigmate*). We follow the trope of enigma (defined as a rhetorically closed simile) through Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, Donatus, and along another trail from Augustine to Aquinas. Biblical scholars and rhetoricians from antiquity through the Renaissance offer another access to the fascinating issues opened up here, as do a range of figurative examples, illustrations, paintings, and sculptures. Nonetheless, as Cook cautions early on, '[T]he focus of the book is on enigma in its literary context and thus on the realm of imaginative literature.' But 'the realm of lived experience and the realm of history' are also called upon as the rhetorical field of enigma is divided, subdivided, illustrated, and illuminated.

The table of contents offers a useful summary of the book's structure. The three case studies (Dante, 'Purgatorio' 27–33, Carroll and the Alice books, Stevens's later work) provide the major illustrations of the five masterplots into which the rhetorical field of enigma is divided: Pauline, Sphinxine/Oedipal, Cyclic, Random, Sibylline. We observe the riddling beasts of enigma personified (sphinx and griffin) and the history of enigma as rhetorical trope, leading to the Dante chapter. Riddle as scheme in the rhetorical sense and riddle as genre and mode lead to Alice, down the rabbit hole and through the mirror. The last sequence explores figures for enigma, moving to Wallace Stevens, the supreme fiction, and 'the structure of reality.' The Stevens case study makes clear that this taxonomy opens rather than closes questions, for 'the answers to the great riddles may themselves be enigmatic,' after which statement a Borges poem is quoted ('Oedipus and the Enigma' in John Hollander's elegant translation) to show how 'the answer does not end the enigma [so much] as start the story all over again.' Stevens,