

Duke University

THE LITERATURE PROGRAM
101 SCIENCE BUILDING
BOX 90670, EAST CAMPUS
DURHAM, NC 27708-0670

TELEPHONE: (919) 684-4127
FAX: (919) 684-3598
www.literature.aas.duke.edu

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To Whom It May Concern:

Professor Jane Mattisson has asked me to write an evaluation of her website on Walter Draycot at walterdray.com, and I am glad to do so. I understand that she will be reviewed for promotion to Associate Professor this fall, and that she wishes to submit my letter as part of her promotion dossier. In part, my task is also to explain the ways in which a website such as this compares to traditional scholarly publication and the challenges it presents for fair and rigorous peer review.

Her website, entitled "Representations of War as Autobiographical Media," focuses on the four media—memoir and sketches, photographs and diaries—preserved in the archives from Walter Draycot, who was born in 1883 in Leicester County, England, fought in the Boer War and World War I, and then emigrated to Canada, finally settling north of Vancouver. The site includes Professor Mattisson's essays on a number of topics as well numerous photographs, several strategic sketches that Draycot drew as part of his war duties, and scholarly bibliographies relevant to her topic. She approaches her analyses through autobiographical theory and criticism, including such topics as the "narrating I," the nature of the four media the website represents, and of course, Draycot himself as a historical and literary subject. While her approach tends to rely on established scholarship rather than break new ground, it shows a strong grasp of the theory and an intelligent application of it to these materials. The site is well-designed for easy navigation and transparency, and it makes ample use of cross-references, visual materials, and outside links.

If presented as print scholarship, this work would probably not be able to include the wide range of visual materials, a primary reason why Draycot attracts attention as a historical subject. It also would have a much smaller audience than when published on the Web. If published in a small-circulation specialized journal, it might attract a few dozen readers. On the Web, it may attract hundreds or even thousands of people, many of whom may be scholars but others of whom may be citizens interested in British Columbia regional history, in autobiography as a literary form, in World War I memoirs, etc. Finally, the communication between the author and readers would be much more limited if it were a print publication compared to a website (she notes in a footnote that she receives two or three responses a week from readers of her website). It is clear to me that Web publication is fast on its way to becoming as important a venue for serious scholarship as print, and indeed in some respects it has

already surpassed print; important scientific and mathematical papers are now routinely published first on the Web and cited as such. The days are past when one can routinely assume that print scholarship is more prestigious, more accurate, and/or more rigorous than work on the web; a recent study, for example, found that scientific articles in *Wikipedia* had an accuracy rating of 98%, compared with 99% for the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, the gold standard for accuracy.

I hope that you will find this letter helpful in evaluating Professor Mattisson's website. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you want more information.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "N. Katherine Hayles". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name.

N. Katherine Hayles

Professor, Literature Program, Duke University

Distinguished Professor Emerita, University of California, Los Angeles