

In defence of Kingsley Amis: The letters

Last Updated: 3:09am BST 12/10/2007

In letters to the Daily Telegraph the homosexual brother-in-law and the former wife of novelist Sir Kingsley Amis have defended the late literary giant against accusations by prominent Marxist intellectual Terry Eagleton that he was a "hating reviler of...gays." Here are the letters in full:

Kingsley Amis no racist

SIR – With reference to Nigel Reynolds's piece quoting Professor Terry Eagleton's view of Kingsley and Martin Amis, I should like to point out that Kingsley was never a racist, nor an anti-Semitic boor.

advertisement Our (mutual) four great friends who witnessed our wedding were three Jews and one homosexual.

I never heard Kingsley behave in a racist manner towards Jews, nor, when teaching in Nashville, did he accept the attitude of the racist whites towards black people there.

It is odd that Prof Eagleton reviles Martin Amis for not recognising "the folly and ignorance of believing that authoritarianism and injustice can secure the defense of liberty" when Islam, and the Sharia law pronounced in the Koran as essential to its practice, advocate both injustice and authoritarianism to women and homosexuals.

I have not read Martin's essay and therefore cannot comment on it, except to add to his remark that "the Muslim community will have to suffer until it gets its house in order".

It is not only they who have to suffer, but all of us. We cannot condone a religion or a political party that ignores the rights of half the human race.

Elizabeth Jane Howard Bungay, Suffolk

SIR – As the homosexual brother-in-law of Kingsley Amis, I lived with him and my sister for 17 years.

During that time, we became very close and affectionate friends.

Prof Eagleton is, at the least, careless in his description of Kingsley as homophobic.

Calling him anti-Semitic should be actionable were it not so absurd.

I wonder, but not much, if everything Prof Eagleton writes is as lazy and silly as his attacks on Kingsley and Martin Amis.

Colin Howard London N19

Information appearing on telegraph.co.uk is the copyright of Telegraph Media Group Limited and must not be reproduced in any medium without licence. For the full copyright statement see [Copyright](#)