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Letter to the Secretary of the Fellowship

David Mendel

Kent

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LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF THE FELLOWSHIP

The following letter was received from Dr David Mendel, a long-standing member of the Fellowship:

Dear Kathleen Adams

I am writing to say thank you very much for all the work which you continue to do on behalf of us punters. If I weren't 80 I would volunteer for some job myself to ease your load, but my get up and go has got up and is gone.

I was disappointed with Rosalind Miles's Memorial Lecture. Having set up a pretty spurious list of straw men – and women – she spent the rest of the lecture proving what we all know anyway, which is that GE rises above all that.

In addition she said 'In fact her cranium measured 22¼ inches in diameter which is not so large at all...'. 22¼ is the width of a large TV screen. Even in the 19th century that would have been on the big side. Perhaps she should add a further straw man to her list:- Inability to distinguish between diameter and circumference! I'm surprised that neither of your distinguished editors picked it up. As it is scientists who are usually thought of as being victims of the cultural divide, it is interesting that here are at least two members of the educated classes who don't understand the difference between two simple English words.

The other feeling I get from the articles, which are mainly written by women, is a feeling of feminist triumphalism. George Eliot – and most of my favourite novelists are women, but more important, they are people. If she had been a man and male writers had gloated so, it would be equally disagreeable. A bit less feminisim and a bit more humanism would be my prescription.

I would like a copy of the Pitkin Guide and include my cheque for £3.50.

Long may your endeavours continue,

yours

[Dr David Mendel, Faversham, Kent]

The editors would like to thank Dr Mendel for his correction and regret their failure to notice the geometrical error to which he draws attention. At the same time they wish to express their hope that other readers did not come away from their reading of last year's George Eliot Review as a whole with a 'feeling of feminist triumphalism'. They would like to point out that nearly half of the contributors to that issue were men and that none of the four main articles was concerned with gender issues at all.