

The positive attributes of anger

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There [was a fabulous article in the Guardian](#) yesterday by Priyamvada Gopal. It addressed the outbreak of genuine anger in the UK in July, focussed on media abuse, and contrasted it with the hatred shown by the right wing terrorist in Norway:

A clear distinction exists between the widespread moral indignation that forced politicians out of their customary genuflection to media barons and the manufactured righteousness ventilated by the Norwegian terrorist. Real indignation is born not of hatred but of empathy and solidarity with others. It seeks to move beyond the particulars of one's self and community to something more universally human. Our shared anger at Murdoch drew on a humane sense that the sufferings of other people matter and the further exploitation of the already vulnerable is not to be tolerated.

The vicious hatreds of Breivik and his fellow ideologues in Britain and beyond are best defeated by expanding the scope of our own indignation. Hatred is lazy; the moral deployment of anger takes work. It requires the honesty shown by an astonishing recent polemic entitled ["I'm starting to think the left might actually be right"](#), in which the conservative commentator Charles Moore acknowledges: "The rich run a global system that allows them to accumulate capital and pay the lowest possible price for labour. The freedom that results applies only to them. The many simply have to work harder, in conditions that grow ever more insecure, to enrich the few."

Anger is justified because anger is an empathic, responsible response to injustice. Hatred on the other hand is contempt for others. The contrast could not be greater.

Hatred is negative, at best hurtful, and it is invariably destructive - including of the person who harbours it.

Anger is positive. The following [quote from](#) George Bernard Shaw came to my mind when reading this article:

The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the

unreasonable man.

It is anger that makes people unreasonable. Thank heaven for unreasonable people. I admit I enjoy their company, and know quite a lot of them!