

WHAT KIND OF LIGHT AM I?

What kind of light am I? Such a question reminds me of the notion of *binary oppositions*, that is to say that we can only describe something because it is not something else. So our notion of 'good' is defined by its opposition to 'bad' and something or someone is 'bright' because they are not 'dim'.

Have I met some very bright people? Of course I have, many of them members of Watford Writers. But I have also witnessed some very dim people, who are sometimes at their most entertaining or dangerous when their sense of their own importance, dimness cloaked in pomposity, allows them to shine their dimness across the globe, if such a paradox is possible.

Today as I drove home I was listening to the news of yet another mass shooting in the United States. In the 86 days we have had this year so far, there has been a number of mass shootings, which is something that, for those of us who live in countries such as our own, is almost unbelievable.

Today's shooting resulted in primary-aged children being killed by a woman who wielded a semi-automatic gun. Tragically, those children's lights have been dimmed forever.

But still the madness continues. Members of America's National Rifle Association still talk about the right to bear arms, and come out with slogans such as 'Guns don't kill people, people kill people.' Such people will sometimes ally themselves with those who insist that climate change isn't really happening and that the world is flat. Perhaps they believe the moon is made of green cheese. But what do I know?

Yes, they insist that the world is flat, even though we now have photographs of our world from space, showing us what a beautiful planet we inhabit. And, lest we forget, of all the species that have ever inhabited this world, we humans have done more damage than all the other species put together.

But let us not dwell on this, especially on this most tragic of days. Let us dwell of the light brought to us by those young children, who are no longer with us. We did not know them, but we can know what they brought to their families and their friends: smiles, laughter, and an innocence which believes in human goodness, in doing what is right, before having the opportunity to grow up to discover the presence of evil darkness, seeking to create a world in which all good light is hidden in a shroud of deceit.

Let me return to the question first posed: 'What kind of light am I?' I try to be that light which reflects the light which is shone on me, so that those with the brightness of good see that shining back on them, and those with the dimness of evil have that reflected back to them, in full measure.

I did not ever know those children, now lost, but I shall remember them as I think of their peers, and the duty that people such as myself, and those of my generation, have towards the smaller, but brighter, human lights, who have come to join us. They should know that, just as they make the worlds around them brighter, so will we seek to ensure that our world, Planet Earth, remains the most beautiful beacon of light in the whole of the universe.

Amen.