

# 義憤填膺

*yi4 fen4 tian2 ying1*

An emergency team at a Cincinnati zoo in the US shot and killed a gorilla after a young boy fell into its enclosure. The action triggered an outcry from netizens who said the zoo staff should have tried to tranquilize the 17-year-old gorilla first.

They had apparently watched a video that appeared to show the gorilla had no intention of harming the child, or was even protecting him. The zoo said that they had to shoot as the boy was in danger. A subsequent video showed the gorilla dragging the boy across a pond and banging his head on a wall.

Netizens then turned their wrath on the boy's parents, criticizing them for failing to take proper care of the young child. Some even went so far as saying that the father of the boy should be the one to die. These critics must be feeling “義憤填膺” (*yi4 fen4 tian2 ying1*).

“膺” (*yi4*) is “justice,” “righteousness,” “憤” (*fen4*) “anger,” “indignant,” “to resent,” “填” (*tian2*) “to fill up,” and “膺” (*ying1*) “the chest.”

## Idiom by Lon Yan

“義憤” as a term, means “righteous indignation.” Literally, “義憤填膺” (*yi4 fen4 tian2 ying1*) is “righteous indignation fills chest.”

The idiom means “to be filled with righteous indignation,” “to feel indignant at the injustice,” “to be righteously angry.”

These days, people seem to become “義憤填膺” (*yi4 fen4 tian2 ying1*) every day and are very quick to condemn, acting on whatever they see on the internet without bothering to wait for all the facts to be properly established.

They may feel that justice is on their side, but so did those who burned “witches” and those who conduct public lynchings.

### Terms containing the character “義” (*yi4*) include:

公義 (*gong1 yi4*) - righteousness

義工 (*yi4 gong1*) - volunteer worker

義賣 (*yi4 mai4*) - a charity bazaar

義父 (*yi4 fu4*) - a foster father