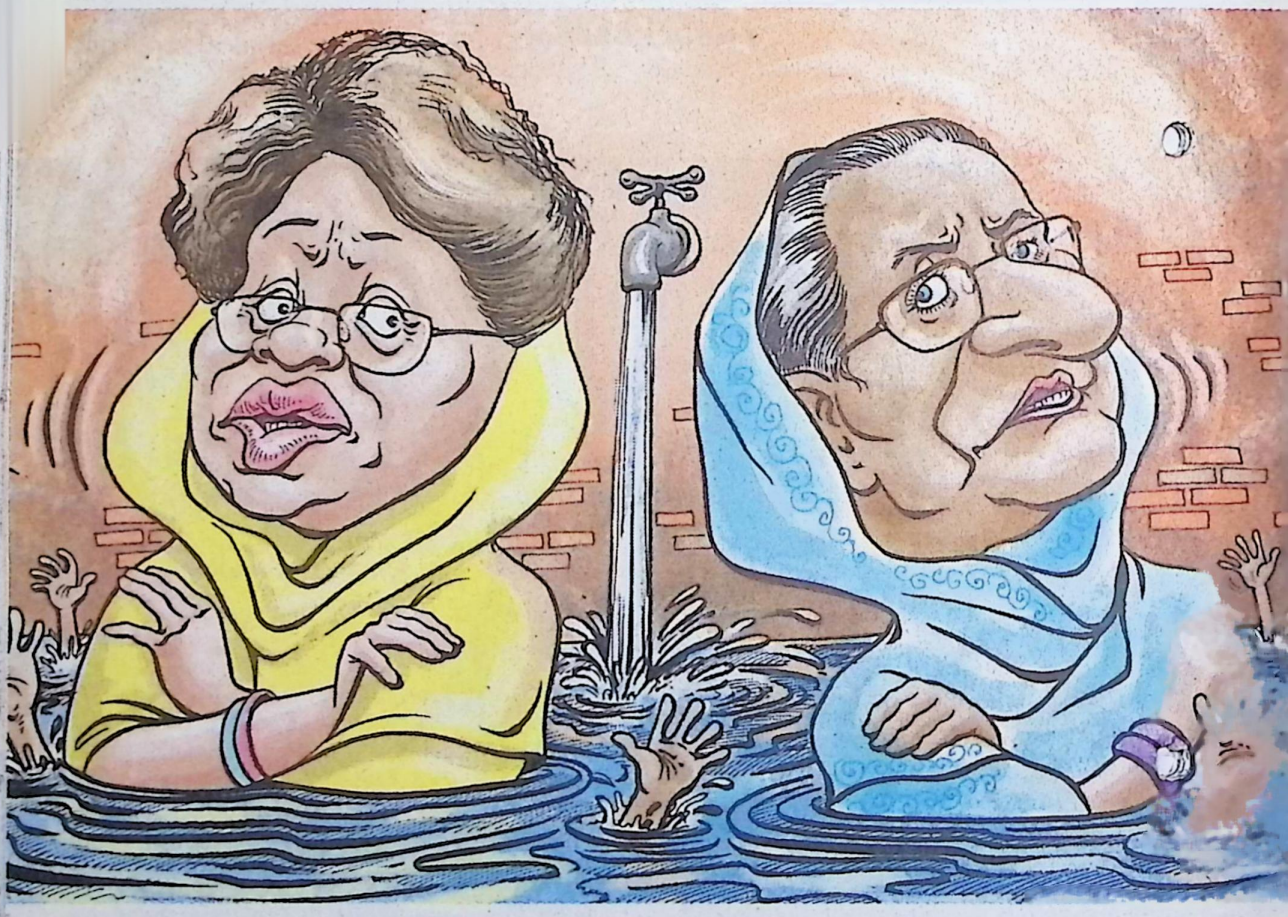
There have been many attempts to explain this emotion. The limited research on this subject suggested that our ability to hate may actually be an adaptation to evolution. Hate made it easier for early humans to fight for food which was quite scarce at the time. Disturbingly enough, as life became easier over time through agriculture and technology, we were never really able to shed off this venomous urge and continued to squabble and deprive each other of resources which could easily be shared, thus compromising the peace (and sanity) of our race.

In 2008, an experiment was conducted in London which included 17 subjects who strongly hated someone (colleague, ex-wife etc). Their brains were mapped with an MRI scanner as they looked at photos of people they despised. Researchers noticed that two regions of the brain (putamen and insular cortex) would light up whenever they looked at the photos. Interestingly, these two regions also lit up when the subjects were shown photos of loved ones. As the putamen also prepares our bodies for movement, the researchers hypothesised that this area alerts the brain for action when protecting a loved one and to prepare for self-defense against attacks from those we hate.

While this research showed to an extent that the saying that love and hate are separated by a thin line, may be true, it also showed a distinct difference between these two complex emotions. When the subjects looked at a person s/he loved the areas of the frontal cortex, which is associated with judgment and critical thinking became more relaxed than usual but the sight of a hated person triggered an alarm in the brain which caused the frontal cortex to be on the alert. This shows that hatred involves a certain amount of reasoning on our part and isn't just instinctive.



In Medieval times, it was so common to hate that there was a legal term for it-*inimicitia* (unfriendship) and this gave birth to a European custom called *vendetta*, which obligated generations of descendants to seek revenge, no matter how long it took, a custom, which spread to our part of the world where it seems, it is still popular today.