

You are being gaslighted

By Strange Sounds – Sep 15, 2020

What is Gaslighting?

The term originates in the systematic psychological manipulation of a victim by her husband in Patrick Hamilton's 1938 play *Gas Light* (film adaptations released in 1940 & 44). In the story, the husband attempts to convince his wife and others that she's insane by manipulating small elements of their environment and insisting she's remembering things incorrectly or delusional when she points out the changes.

The play's title alludes to how the abusive husband slowly dims the gas lights in their home but pretends nothing has changed, in an effort to make his wife doubt her own perceptions. The wife repeatedly asks her husband to confirm her perceptions about the dimmed lights, but in defiance of reality, he keeps insisting the lights are the same – and that she is going insane.

These days, we're living in a perpetual state of gaslighting. 'Reality' that the media reports is at complete odds with what we see with our own eyes. When we question the false reality they present, or claim what WE see is actual reality, we are vilified as racist or bigots or just plain crazy.

You're not racist. You're not crazy. You're being gaslighted.

New York State has twice as many deaths from Covid-19 than any other state, and New York has accounted for 1/5 of all Covid-19 deaths, yet we're told that New York Governor Andrew Cuomo handled the pandemic better than any other governor. But if we support policies of Governors whose states had only a fraction of the cases and deaths as New York, we're called anti-science and 'want people to die'.

So, are we crazy? No, we're being gaslighted.

We see mobs of people looting stores, smashing windows, setting cars on fire and burning down buildings, but we're told these demonstrations are peaceful protests. And when we call this destruction of our cities riots, we are called racists.

Are we crazy? No, we're being gaslighted.

We see the problems destroying many inner-cities: murder, gang violence, drug-dealing, drive-by shootings, armed robbery, etc. But we are told that police are the problem in the inner-cities. We're told we must defund the police and remove law enforcement from crime-riddled cities to

make them safer. If we advocate for more policing in cities overrun by crime, we are accused of being white supremacists and racists.

Are we crazy? No, we're being gaslighted.

The USA accepts more immigrants than any other country in the world. The vast majority of the immigrants are 'people of color', and these immigrants are enjoying freedom and economic opportunity not available to them in their country of origin. But we are told that the USA is the most racist and oppressive country on the planet, and if we disagree, we are called racist and xenophobic.

Are we crazy? No, we're being gaslighted.

Capitalist countries are the most prosperous countries in the world. The standard of living is the highest in capitalist countries. We see more poor people move up the economic ladder to the middle and even the wealthy class through their effort and ability in capitalist countries than any other economic system in the world. But we're told capitalism is an oppressive system designed to keep people down.

Are we crazy? No, we're being gaslighted.

The most egregious example of gaslighting is the concept of 'white fragility'. You spend your life trying to be a good person, treating people fairly and with respect. You disavow racism and bigotry in all its forms. You judge people solely on the content of their character and not by the color of their skin. Yet you're told you're a racist, not because of something you thought, said or did, but solely because of the color of your skin. You know instinctively that charging someone with racism because of their skin color is itself racist. You know you are not racist, so you defend yourself and your character. But you're told your defense of yourself is proof of your racism.

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