

# AMERICA IN CRISIS: THE LEGACY OF LIES

The promotion of lies to gain and maintain power has become a core strategy in American politics for several generations. Since the election of Donald Trump in 2016, lies both big and small have become ubiquitous, especially with the proliferation of social media and cable news. The nature of these lies and their function in the creation of a delusional bond between President Trump and his base of followers will be reviewed in this presentation. In particular the speakers will discuss Trump's use of gaslighting during the Covid Pandemic, as well as the promotion of the Big Lie of Trump's election victory in the 2020 election. The fateful explosion of rage resulting from the collision of these lies with the reality of Trump's defeat, which occurred during the January 6<sup>th</sup> attack on the U.S. Capital, has scarred the nation. The speakers will discuss the legacy of these lies for American society during the Biden administration and beyond. In particular they will demonstrate how the cancerous, cryptopsychotic process which underlay Trump's bond with his supporters continues to metastasize throughout the social fabric and body politic with possibly dire results.

## Learning Objectives

After attending this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Explain the recent proliferation of lies in political and social discourse in terms of psychodynamics of pervasive shame and feelings of powerlessness.
2. Describe the psychodynamics of the relationship between the narcissistic leader and the desire of the group to merge with him or her.
3. Compare and contrast the use of lies and truth in the current political environment with the years of the prior administration.

Handout: Bibliography/References

## FORMAT:

10:00am – 10:45am Lecture

10:45am – 11:30am Discussant

11:30am – 12:00pm Dialogue between George Hagman, LCSW, Harry Paul, Ph.D. and Charles Strozier, Ph.D.

12:00pm – 12:30pm Audience participation and Q & A.

**Presenters:**

**George Hagman, LCSW** is a clinical social worker and psychoanalyst in private practice in New York City and Stamford, Connecticut. He is on faculty of the Training and Research in Intersubjective Self Psychology, and is a training analyst, supervisor, and faculty member of the Westchester Center for the Study of Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy. George is co-editor with Peter Zimmermann and Harry Paul of *Intersubjective Self Psychology: A Primer* (Routledge, 2019). He is also the General Editor of the *Art, Creativity and Psychoanalysis* book series and *New Directions in Self Psychology* book series both published by Routledge.

**Harry Paul, Ph.D.** is a licensed clinical psychologist and psychoanalyst. He is a co-founder, member of the Board of Directors, supervisor and faculty member of TRISP, The Training and Research Institute in Intersubjective Self Psychology in New York City. He co-authored with Richard Ulmann, *The Self Psychology of Addiction and Its Treatment: Narcissus in Wonderland* (Routledge, 2006) and written numerous other papers on Intersubjectivity and Self Psychology. He is a co-editor and author of *Intersubjective Self Psychology: A Primer*, (Routledge, 2019). Dr. Paul practices in New York City and Chappaqua, New York.