

Maybe New York City Deserves to End

Americans are leaving big cities in droves. The *Daily Mail*, [writing](#) about the exodus from Los Angeles quotes a local resident as saying, “The streets look like Haiti after the earthquake. It’s dirty, dangerous and work has dried up. Even when studios start to open up, people will choose to work from other places.”

In the first part of this year, cities were afflicted by COVID-19. Business opportunities dried up due to the shutdowns. That was followed by riots and then a crime wave that seems to only be getting worse.

No American city has been hit harder by the upheavals of 2020 than New York City. The Big Apple has seen many ups and downs in its long history, yet some people believe this may finally be its end. James Altucher, a New York resident, [wrote](#) a lengthy article titled “NYC is dead forever. Here’s why.” He presents many pieces of evidence supporting his argument, but the most critical one is the development of high-speed internet. “People have left New York City and have moved completely into virtual worlds,” he writes. “Everyone has spent the past five months adapting to a new lifestyle. Nobody wants to fly across the country for a two hour meeting when you can do it just as well on Zoom... Everyone has choices now.”

Altucher is fairly level-headed about this development. But other New Yorkers are engaging in public displays of mourning. The “lament for the death of New York City” might be a new literary genre spawned by COVID-19. Examples include “[Bright lights, abandoned city](#),” by Chadwick Moore at *Spectator USA* or “[Why I Won’t Leave New York City, But Probably Should](#),” by David Marcus at *The Federalist*.

There is nothing wrong with being proud of your home. However, New Yorkers have always taken their self-congratulation for “being New Yorkers” to ridiculous heights. As an example of this, E.B. White [wrote](#), “But the city makes up for its hazards and deficiencies by supplying its citizens with massive doses of a supplementary vitamin—the sense of belonging to something unique, cosmopolitan, mighty and unparalleled.”

Since White penned this in the 1940s, the cultural homages to the city have become absurd.

Today, New Yorkers consider living in their city to be an achievement in its own right – even if it means living with five housemates in a dingy apartment that costs more than half your monthly income.

Maybe New Yorkers keep repeating how great the city is because they are trying to convince themselves of something that – deep down – they know isn’t true. They like to describe their lifestyle with terms like “grit” or “hustle” but perhaps those are just fancy names for “misery.” Rents are the third [highest](#) in the entire world. New York state’s tax burden on its residents is [higher](#) than anywhere else in America. New York City has the highest abortion [rate](#) in America. It is a place that is hostile to human existence.

Maybe New York City deserves to end.

Mayor Bill de Blasio bears much of the blame for the city’s current woes. His handling of the pandemic has been particularly bad. He has also done little to curb the rioters. In fact, his own daughter is one of them. When she was arrested, he [said](#), “I’m proud of her that she cares so much.” He acquiesced to Black Lives Matters’ demands to defund the police by [cutting](#) \$1 billion from the NYPD budget.

But who elected de Blasio as mayor? New Yorkers themselves. Other Americans know better.

Mayor de Blasio failed dismally in his recent run for the Democratic presidential nomination – and so did his predecessor Mike Bloomberg. American voters looked at what these two mayors had done with New York and wanted no part of it.

Frank Sinatra's classic song "New York, New York" contains the famous lyric: "If I can make it there, I can make it anywhere." It has become a cliché, but it's demonstrably false.

When people move to other big cities in America, they usually make a clear-headed assessment about the pros and cons of living there. They don't have illusions that living there equals a state of transcendence – as New Yorkers seem to do, or at least did until recently.

New York City will undoubtedly continue to exist, albeit in a diminished form. It will become a normal big city like so many others in America. And that's a good thing.

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