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When Arguments Drag On, Hitler Shows Up: Godwin’s Law

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On internet message boards, when a post that divides opinion gathers hundreds of comments, at some point someone tends to compare the other side to a dictator. And this happens even when the thread started out as a chat about restaurants or movies. There is a famous rule of thumb that sums up this pattern in a single sentence: ‘Godwin’s Law.’ Put simply, Godwin’s Law is an internet adage meaning that ‘as an online discussion grows longer, the probability that someone will compare an opponent or an argument to the Nazis or Hitler approaches 1.’ It is named after the American lawyer and author M