



Stop comparing Trump to Hitler!

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I don't know about you, but I am getting tired of all the Trump/Hitler comparisons. Some of my more liberal friends have obviously lost their minds.

Exaggerating the similarities between these two doesn't serve to move our collective dialog forward or bring us closer together. In fact, it only drives us further apart.

Honestly, how could anyone with any intelligence think Trump and Hitler have anything in common?

For example, Hitler rose to power by building a unique coalition of supporters from different political factions. Trump, on the other hand, commandeered an existing political party.

Moreover, Hitler served honorably as an enlisted man during World War I. He was even wounded and suffered temporary blindness. Trump didn't serve at all.

And let us not forget that Hitler was from a family of very modest means. He failed as an aspiring artist and suffered severe hardship in Vienna before finding his footing in the political arena.

I could go on and on, but perhaps the best way to clear up the confusion would be to describe Hitler's leadership philosophy and approach to wielding power - and then let readers decide for themselves.

Tell me, does any of this sound like Trump?

Hitler routinely claimed that Germany's only option for a bright future was to give him control over all aspects of government and the economy.

Hitler's primary means of establishing an authoritarian regime was by silencing criticism and neutralizing any potential challengers to his rule.

Hitler exercised complete control over the media, and his version of events was the only one news outlets were allowed to disseminate.

Hitler believed that the constitution was a relatively malleable document that could be modified or ignored if it interfered with his agenda.

Hitler believed the courts existed primarily to support whatever laws he deemed necessary to achieve his goals and objectives.

Hitler relied on his own private police force to enforce his mandates and regularly imprisoned or killed anyone who disagreed with the direction he was taking the country.

Hitler liked large-scale rallies and desperately wanted to be adored by the citizens of his country. He often claimed he had the largest crowds in the world.

Hitler was known to give long speeches in which he rambled incoherently about things he had very little firsthand knowledge or insight.

Hitler relied on his henchmen to carry out the bulk of his policies, which also allowed them to be used as scapegoats if everything didn't go as planned.

Hitler loved military parades designed to show how powerful he was both domestically and abroad, and as a warning to any potential adversaries who might decide to challenge his authority.

Hitler was very narcissistic and habitually ignored the advice of those who knew more than he did on a variety of subjects.

Hitler used expletives and derogatory language when referring to those who challenged his ideas or dared to suggest he might be wrong about something. He enjoyed describing them as stupid, naïve, and inferior.

Hitler was never afraid to fabricate the truth when it served his purpose. He would simply make things up – especially if his lies showed him in a more favorable light.

Hitler would always double-down when anyone called him out on anything – even if it was obvious he was completely wrong.

Hitler considered any group pushing back in any way against his vision to be enemies and dealt with them accordingly.

Hitler regularly cast those who didn't fit his notion of the ideal citizen as needing to be eradicated from society.

Hitler sought to define what constituted an acceptable family and punished those who didn't conform to his preferred model.

Hitler built large concentration camps where those he deemed undesirable could be taken until they could either be deported or disappeared.

Finally, Hitler instigated a scorched earth policy when it became apparent that he was losing the war. If he couldn't be in charge, he didn't care what happened to his country or its people.

There you have it. A quick snapshot of all the key characteristics that made Hitler who he has.

Seriously, how could anyone think it's ever acceptable or appropriate to compare Trump to one of the most malevolent monsters in human history?

Yes, that was a rhetorical question. Let's stop comparing Trump to Hitler.



— *Aaron W. Hughey is a university distinguished professor in the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs at Western Kentucky University.*