

Violence will rise as climate changes, scientists predict

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While social commentators have long suggested that extreme heat can unleash the beast in man, formal study of the so-called heat hypothesis — the theory that high temperatures fuel aggressive and violent behavior — is relatively new. Using examples as disparate as road rage, ancient wars and Major League Baseball, scientists have taken early steps to quantify the potential influence of climate warming on human conflict.

Now, three UC Berkeley researchers have pulled together data from these and other studies and concluded that the incidence of war and civil unrest may increase by as much as 56% between now and 2050, due to warmer temperature and extreme rainfall patterns predicted by climate change scientists.

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The paper “presents a strong case for the effects of rapid climate change on violence,” said Craig A. Anderson, an Iowa State psychology professor who studies violence. “There is considerable evidence that when people are uncomfortably hot, they become more physically aggressive. They tend to interpret minor annoyances as being more serious and intentional provocations than they would in comfortable temperatures.”

Read the whole story: [*Los Angeles Times*](#)