



Study: Global Warming Could Trigger Rise in Violent Behavior

BY KTLA 5 WEB STAFF



Long before scientists began to study global warming, author Raymond Chandler described the violent effects of dry, “oven-hot” Santa Ana winds gusting through the city of Los Angeles.

“Every booze party ends in a fight,” he wrote in his 1938 story “Red Wind.” “Meek little wives feel the edge of the carving knife and study their husband’s necks. Anything can happen.”

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.

Likewise, episodes of interpersonal violence — murder, assault, rape, domestic abuse — could increase by as much as 16%, they report in a study published Thursday by the journal *Science*.