

Study links guns and hormones in men

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U.S. psychologists say they've found that handling a gun creates a hormonal reaction in men that can prime them for aggression.

Psychologists at Knox College in Galesburg, Ill., enrolled 30 male students in what was presented as a taste study, The New York Times reported. The researchers took saliva samples from the students and measured testosterone levels.

The students were seated, one at a time, at a table in a bare room. On the table were pieces of paper and either the board game Mouse Trap or a large handgun. Their instructions: Take apart the game or the gun and write directions for assembly and disassembly.

Fifteen minutes later, the psychologists again measured testosterone levels and discovered high levels in men who had handled the gun, with levels remaining steady in those working with the board game.

The students were then asked to taste a cup of water with a drop of hot sauce in it and prepare a similar drink for the next person in the experiment, adding as much hot sauce as they liked.

The psychologists said those handling the gun put in about three times as much hot sauce as the others.

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