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# Berk. Study: Violence in the Country Translates to Violence on the Field

MGO

KCBS News, Local News  
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Take World Cup soccer, add some college professors who are big fans, and there's a chance you'll get a view of the game you've never had before. That's exactly what has happened with one U.C. Berkeley professor and some colleagues, and the outcome is stunning.

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Soccer is a sport that captures the imagination of the world, in part, because people think the performance of their country's team somehow reflects on their culture and society. And an important part of the game are the yellow and red cards handed out for breaking the rules. So, what does it say about a country whose team racks up a lot of penalties?

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"We looked in particular at yellow and red cards that were linked to violent fouls, and we found a very surprising, but striking revelation," said Ted Miguel, a UC Berkeley economics professor who's co-authored a paper after looking at hundreds of soccer matches over several years. "Countries that have more political violence, such as civil war, also tend to have players that commit a lot of yellow and red cards."

This includes countries such as Turkey and Columbia.

Miguel and his colleagues predict that Sunday's final between Spain and the Netherlands will be a fairly [clean](#) game, without a lot of cards issued.



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Fred  
July 9, 2010 8:43 AM

The prognosticators were correct. Very few yellow/red cards issued in the Spain/Netherlands game.

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