



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on November 19, 2015

Warmer Is Better: Colder Planet = More War, Famine, Death

“Livestock died from cold in their barns, chicken’s combs froze and fell off, trees exploded and travellers froze to death on the roads,” William Derham, a contributor to the *Royal Society Philosophical Transactions*, wrote in 1709. “Fish froze in the rivers, game lay down in the fields and died, and small birds perished by the million. The loss of tender herbs and exotic fruit trees was no surprise, but even hardy native oaks and ash trees succumbed.”



As the United Nations Climate Change Conference (November 30-December 11) in Paris approaches, the global warming alarm choir continues to pour on the heated rhetoric about the supposed [“existential threat”](#) posed by anthropogenic (manmade) global warming, or AGW.

In addition to the fact that, despite all the hyperventilating and handwringing by the alarmists [there has been no measurable global warming for nearly 19 years](#), the historical record indicates that it is periods of global *cooling, not warming*, that have been most disastrous for our planet. In a new guest essay on the climate website WattsUpWithThat, Canadian environmental scientist Dr. Tim Ball provides some much-needed perspective on the climate changes of the past, particularly focusing on the extremely harsh cold spell at the start of the 18th century. Entitled, [“1709: The Disparate Economic And Political Impact of Weather And Climate”](#), Dr. Ball’s investigation makes effective use of diaries and scientific reports from the era to provide a stark picture of the unforgiving nature of the hardships during the period known as the Little Ice Age (LIA). The LIA, a period that stretched roughly from the 14th century to the mid-19th century, followed the Medieval Warm Period (MWP, also known as the Medieval Climate Optimum), which ran from around AD 950-1300.

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British scientist William Derham, quoted above, wrote:

People across Europe awoke on 6 January 1709 to find the temperature had plummeted. A three-week freeze was followed by a brief thaw — and then the mercury plunged again and stayed there. From Scandinavia in the north to Italy in the south, and from Russia in the east to the west coast of France, everything turned to ice. The sea froze. Lakes and rivers froze, and the soil froze to a depth of a metre or more. Livestock died from cold in their barns, chicken’s combs froze and fell off, trees exploded and travellers froze to death on the roads. It was the coldest winter in 500 years.

“Estimates place related deaths in France, mostly due to famine, to 600,000 by the end of 1710,” writes Dr. Ball. Of course, it was the poor who suffered the effects of the cold most severely. But even the wealthier classes were not exempt. Ball quotes a diary entry of Francoise-Marie de Bourbon, Duchess of Orleans, who wrote of the bitter cold: “I am sitting by a roaring fire, have a screen before the door, which is closed, so that I can sit here with a sable fur piece around my neck and my feet in a bearskin sack and I am still shivering with cold and can barely hold the pen. Never in my life have I seen a winter



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such as this one.”

An observer in Burgundy wrote: “Travelers died in the countryside, livestock in the stables, wild animals in the woods; nearly all the birds died, wine froze in barrels and public fires were lit to warm the poor.”

IPCC “Hockey Stick” Disappears MWP and LIA

“The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2001 Report claimed that neither the Medieval Warm Period (MWP) nor the Little Ice Age (LIA) occurred,” Dr. Ball writes. “They created the ‘hockey stick’ graph to prove their point.”

A striking visual image was needed to sell the idea of a dramatic, upward trend in global temperatures in the 20th century. So, the [infamous hockey stick graph](#) (popularized by Al Gore) simply erased the inconvenient truth of the MWP and LIA, two of the most well established epochs in the climatic record. And voilà! The necessary image “proving” AGW was born. Among the problems for the hockey stick fabricators, however, is a nemesis of their own making. Professor Ball reproduces a graph from the IPCC’s own 1990 Report which shows the MWP and LIA, contradicting its later hockey stick temperature “reconstruction.”

“If you are 80 years old, you have lived through four climate changes,” Dr. Ball notes,” pointing to “the warming from 1900 to 1940, the cooling from 1940 to 1980, the warming from 1980 to 2000 and the slight cooling from 2000 to the present.” “There are individual years within each period that had a significant impact,” Ball points out: “The summer of 1934, the winter of 1936, the winter of 1947 and so on.”

Dr. Ball’s essay adds to the considerable literature pointing toward cold periods as being far more dangerous and deadly than warm periods. An extensive study published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States* (PNAS) in 2011 found that times of war and conflict are more readily associated with periods of global cooling, not warming. The authors of the study wrote: “Results show that cooling from A.D. 1560-1660 caused successive agro-ecological, socioeconomic, and demographic catastrophes, leading to the General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century.” In addition, the report noted: “Cooling during the Cold Phase (1560-1660 AD) reduced crop yields by shortening the growing season and shrinking the cultivated land area.... Inflating grain prices led to hardships for many, and triggered social problems and conflicts such as rebellions, revolutions, and political reforms. Many of these disturbances led to armed conflicts, and the number of wars increased 41 percent during the Cold Phase.”

“Famine became more frequent too,” the authors further reported. “Nutrition deteriorated, and the average height of Europeans shrunk 2cm by the late 16th century. As temperatures began to rise again after 1650, so did the average height.”

“In the 18th century, the mild climate improved matters considerably, leading to the speedy recovery of both Europe’s economy and population,” the study notes.

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