

[*17] The discourse of weather reporting has become even more apocalyptic in the meantime. When I moved out to Western Washington five years ago, the waves of moisture that drift up from the tropical Pacific during the winter months were called "The Pineapple Express," a soft and sweet-sounding sort of precipitation-delivery system, in keeping with what it most often felt like at ground-level here. Now each of these waves is called an "atmospheric river," as if we are about to be drowned or washed away by chronic deluges. I've had friends back East reach out to me from time to time to ask if I was still okay in the aftermath of such an event reported to them with this new moniker. When I look out the window or walk out the door, it is simply raining, as it was five or five hundred years ago at this time of year. Same goes with terms like "bomb-cyclone" and "snownado," designed more to scare (thus returning for weather updates) than describe, as in look out the window or walk out the door and decide for yourself whether your life is imperiled if you want to walk downtown.