

Here in southern California, we are currently living through our annual late August-early September ritual of wildfires. In the San Fernando Valley, where I live, the air is heavy with smoke, and people are staying inside. It was worse in Pasadena, where I attend a [Quaker meeting](#), and where the houses of several Friends are in danger of going up in flames. The advantage this year is that the Santa Ana winds have not come in yet.

But it is somewhat misleading for me to say that this is an annual ritual. It has only been that over the last few years. When I was growing up, brushfire danger loomed every summer: nowadays, it happens. It's not *if* the fires come, but when.

[One might say](#), of course, that this is what happens when the world heats up, and the [scientific studies](#) suggest as much. But I'm sure it's really all just a complete coincidence whipped up by notorious left-wing [radicals](#).