It was the worst of times, it was the best of times. Those of us who were born in the depression and raised in the duration of wartime saluted our flag with pride and honor. Remember when we raised the arm after the hand on the brow, until Hitler’s “heil” changed our style—we put the hand upon our heart, to show how deeply and personally we cared about American values? Kids my age recall how the salute evolved. There was then no phrase “under God” in our pledge of allegiance, only an oath to “one nation with liberty and justice.”

Our culture had countered the depression with a renaissance of spirit in the funnies, the movies, the radio broadcasts, and popular songs like “God Bless America, Land That I Love.”

We hadn’t yet achieved the prosperity and the power we came to enjoy and take for granted. What we meant by freedom was the right to live and pursue happiness.

As a professor in the humanities I sometimes feel a bit alone and lonely. So many of my colleagues by now are younger than I am. Their early memories date back to decades of protest against national policies, our arts often statements against the mainstream. In this autumn of our anguish, they seem to me to huddle together not with, but counter to those citizens who have put our stars and stripes on their cars, in their windows, on their lapels, like badges and bandages of support. For too many academics congratulating each other upon their mutual liberal conformism, the flag is a metaphor not for healthy anger and dignified union, but rather a drapery to conceal ignorance.

I welcome each and every red white and blue logo I see in town and country, on the streets and in the houses, because the near unanimity of sentiment brings me back to a time when America was discovering itself, its inner resources not only to resolve and sacrifice, but also of understanding and of defining our spiritual strengths. When we fought against the forces of fascism, we used not only the weapons of warfare, but also words, tough and also oh so gentle. We came to identify, alongside our allies, with the little guys of the world, and to turn away from the worship of totalitarian tyranny. I think we lost our way somewhat in the long drawn-out Cold War. We swapped enemies and friends, and our very language blurred.

At the present moment, the clouds have passed and left a clear horizon before us. The terrorists responsible for the September 11 attack on the United States of America have inherited all the fascist values of World War II—contempt for civilians, hatred of Jews, fear of freedom designed by our founding fathers and mothers, and the arrogance of great fortunes masking their selfishness under a fake traditional lingo. Very much like Hitler!
Queer Arts Fest
March Events

**TH 7**
Reading
8 PM
EILEEN MILES,
JOE WESTMORELAND,
ALEXANDER CHEE (author)
TAPROOM

**FR 8**
Lecture
7 PM
HARMONY HAN-MOND (author, artist, historian)
LIST ART CENTER
ROOM 129

**TU 12**
Lecture
7 PM
DYKE ACTION MACHINE (graphic designers)
RISD AUDITORIUM

**WE 13**
Film Screening and Lecture
7 PM
THE ANITA PALLENBERG STORY
LAURA COTTINGHAM (critic, artist)
RISD AUDITORIUM

**TH 14**
Writing, Performing
Workshop (no cost; attendance only)
ANNA JOY SPRI-NGER (author)
(Evening; contact Jos) Ewing House

**FR 15**
Film Screening
7 PM
PARIS IS BURNING, FIRE
RISD AUDITORIUM

**SA 16**
Reading
ANNA JOY SPRING (author)
Ewing House

**SU 17**
Jazzophone Workshop
7 PM
TIM BURLING (author)
TAPROOM

**MO 19**
Performance
7 PM
NOHY LAMN (author of prose and rock opera)
TAPROOM

**TH 22**
Rock
LINP VRIST
EX-LOS CRUDOS V FOR VENDETTA

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