Here is the link to all OMNI newsletters: [http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/](http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/)  
For a knowledge-based peace, justice, and ecology movement and an informed citizenry as the foundation for change.

**Contents of #1 2009**  
National Flag Week  
Book: *Capture the Flag*  
Dick Bennett: Principles of the Flag  
Blum’s Books and Newsletter: Imperialism USA  
Noam Chomsky: Torture USA  
Newdow: Under God?

**Contents of #2 2011**  
Pledge of Allegiance  
Flag Day  
President Obama  
Avakian: Equal Justice  
Sheehan: Patriotism and Police State  
Books

**Contents #3 June 14, 2012**  
OMNI’s National Days Project  
Patriotism for Citizens of the World  
Flag Burning  
Nationalism and the Flag  
Patriotism and the Flag

ANOTHER IN OMNI’S NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL DAYS PROJECT.  
Half of the Project affirms nonviolent DAYs, such as United Nations Day and Human Rights Day. The other half offers alternatives to violent, imperial, or generally misdirected days, as with the following:  
Feb. 14: Standing on the Side of Love Day (formerly Valentine’s Day)  
May, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Sunday: Julia Ward Howe’s Mother’s Day for Peace (Mother’s Day)  
3\textsuperscript{rd} Sat. in May: Peace Forces Day (Armed Forces Day)  
May, last Monday: Day of Mourning for Victims of Wars
(Memorial Day)
June 14: Liberty and Justice for All Day (Flag Day)
June, 3rd Sunday: Father’s Day for Peace (Father’s Day)
September 11 (9-11): Peaceful Tomorrows Day (Patriot Day)
Oct., 2nd Monday: Indigenous Peoples Day (Columbus Day):
Nov. 11: World Unity Day (Veterans Day) (Or Armistice Day in 1918 when WWI ended).
November: Fourth Thursday: National Day of Gratitude and Atonement (Thanksgiving)
December 7: Pacific Colonial War Day (Pearl Harbor Day)
December 25: Love and Peacemaking Day (Christmas)

PATRIOTISM: WORLD.-WIDE COMMENTS

The love of one’s country is a splendid thing. But why should love stop at the border?

Pablo Casals

Our country is not the only thing to which we owe our allegiance. It is also owed to justice and to humanity. Patriotism consists not in waving the flag, but in striving that our country shall be righteous as well as strong.

James Bryce

Heroism on command, senseless violence, and all the loathsome nonsense that goes by the name of patriotism—how passionately I hate them!

Albert Einstein

To me, it seems a dreadful indignity to have a soul controlled by geography.

George Santanyana

Patriotism is the willingness to kill and be killed for trivial reasons.

Bertrand Russell

Patriotic societies seem to think that the way to educate school children in a democracy is to stage bigger and better flag-saluting.

S.I. Hayakawa
Patriotism is often an arbitrary veneration of real estate above principles.

George Jean Nathan

Patriotism is your conviction that this country is superior to all other countries because you were born in it.

George Bernard Shaw

Each man must for himself alone decide what is right and what is wrong, which course is patriotic and which isn’t. You cannot shirk this and be a man. To decide against your conviction is to be an unqualified and excusable traitor, both to yourself and to your country, let me label you as they may.

Mark Twain

You’ll never have a quiet world ‘til you knock the patriotism out of the human race.

George Bernard Shaw

If I knew something that would serve my country but would harm mankind, I would never reveal it; for I am a citizen of humanity first and by necessity, and a citizen of France second, and only by accident.

Montesquieu

I am not an Athenian or a Greek. I am a citizen of the world.

Socrates

Borders are scratched across the hearts of men
By strangers with a calm, judicial pen,
And when the borders bleed we watch with dread
The lines of ink across the map turn red.

Marya Mannes

Nationalism is a silly cock crowing on his own dunghill.

Richard Aldington

“I do not expect the country will change the war because of my standing here. I stand here to make sure the country doesn’t change me.” Rev. Robert Cromey, St. Luke’s Episcopal church, San Francisco. paraphrasing A. J. Muste.

I have no country to fight for; my country is the earth, and I am a citizen of the world.

Eugene V. Debs
Our country is the world, our countrymen are all mankind. We love the land of our nativity, only as we love all other lands. The interests, rights, and liberties of American citizens are no more dear to us than are those of the whole human race. Hence we can allow no appeal to patriotism, to revenge any national insult or injury.

William Lloyd Garrison

Declaration of Sentiments

Boston Peace Conference

1838

Patriotism is a kind of religion; it is the egg from which wars are hatched.

Guy de Maupassant

Can anything be stupider than that a man has the right to kill me because he lives on the other side of a river and his ruler has a quarrel with mine, though I have not quarreled with him?

Tolstoy

It is lamentable, that to be a good patriot one must become the enemy of the rest of mankind.

Voltaire

Patriotism means to stand by the country. It does not mean to stand by the president or any other public official, save exactly to the degree in which he himself stands by the country. It is patriotic to support him insofar as he efficiently serves the country. It is unpatriotic not to oppose him to the exact extent that by inefficiency or otherwise he fails in his duty to stand by the country. In either event, it is unpatriotic not to tell the truth, whether about the president or anyone else.

Theodore Roosevelt

I suggest that a patriotic American who cares for his country might act on behalf of a different vision. Instead of being feared for our military prowess, we should want to be respected for our dedication to human rights.”

Howard Zinn

Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is to tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism
and exposing the country to danger. It works the same in every country. Hermann Goering (Hitler’s Reichs-Marshall, 1939)

**FLAG BURNING**

**Some Flag Day Thoughts on Flag Burning**

Julian Sanchez | June 14, 2006

We seem to be having yet another of our occasional, moronic flare ups of that perennial Kabuki fight, the flag burning debate, and today seems like as good a day as any to say something about it. Of course, there isn’t a whole lot to say—it’s a simple enough issue and the ground’s well covered—but here’s one thought I haven’t seen floated elsewhere. Since we’re talking about amending the Constitution, I sometimes think there just must be some epidemic of daily flag-burnings on every streetcorner, but as far as I can ascertain, it’s actually pretty rare. Every now and then you see some 14 year old soi-disant "anarchist" in a black bandanna torch one at a protest or something, but everyone else invariably seems either bored or embarrassed by such antics: As a rule, people here recognize that while maybe flag burning is considered political speech under the First Amendment, it is almost always stupid, counterproductive political speech that’s not going to win you any friends.

No, burning American flags is a lot like soccer: Americans have never gotten all that into it, but it’s wildly popular in much of the rest of the world. A rest of the world that, barring a third Bush term, American law does not cover. So it might be worth considering the effects of a burn ban in the places where most of the actual flag burning happens. What do people in the rest of the world think of when they see an American flag being burned? Maybe they just see opposition to American policy or military power. But maybe—if we’re lucky—they also see opposition to American values: Freedom, democracy, reality television. In the wake of a constitutional amendment, though, I can guarantee what a lot of them will think instead is: "This act of political dissent would be a crime in the United States." And in the shadow of that tought, every hateful claim the people burning those flags make about the hollowness of America’s commitment to the high-sounding principles it proclaims will seem a little more plausible.

[http://reason.com/blog/2006/06/14/some-flag-day-thoughts-on-flag](http://reason.com/blog/2006/06/14/some-flag-day-thoughts-on-flag)

America's Love Affair With Nationalism: NPR

[www.npr.org › News › Politics](http://www.npr.org)

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Sep 28, 2011 – Call it what you will — American nationalism or patriotism — it is covering the country like a Wi-Fi cloud — above the fruited plain from sea to ...

America's Love Affair With Nationalism

by Linton Weeks

J. Meric/Getty Images

Fans of the Tampa Bay Rays celebrate during the singing of "God Bless America" during the
game against the Boston Red Sox at Tropicana Field on Sept. 11 in St. Petersburg, Fla.

September 28, 2011

Picture this: An alternate-reality, suspended-in-space American metropolis where steampunk contraptions — like propeller-driven dirigibles, squeaky trolley wires and clunky robotic creatures — operate against a backdrop of clanging liberty bells; red, white and blue powder kegs; and jingoistic posters warning: "Patriots! Arm Thyself Against the Foreigners and Anarchists!"

OK. So you can't quite picture it. No sweat. It's the surrealistic setting of Bioshock: Infinite, a video game — sequel to the critically acclaimed Bioshock — scheduled for release from Irrational Games in 2012.

The storyline is imaginative, assimilating eclectic influences. But one salient characteristic is unmistakable: The pro-Uncle Sam, protectionist feel of the game reflects the mood of many present-day American nationalists.

"The nationalism thrown throughout this is so overt," says video game critic Hilary Goldstein in a preview trailer.

Nationalism can contribute to human progress and freedom and education and economic vitality, or it can contribute to violence, fear, and international conflicts.

- Lloyd Kramer

You don't need to fire up the Xbox 360 to know that there has been among many Americans a swell of nationalism in the years following the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

• Go to a baseball game where fans often croon "God Bless America" during the seventh-inning stretch.

• Check out the American flag pins on the lapels or collars of nearly every politician.

• Listen to Toby Keith's current hit Made in America and read how it inspired a Michigan kindergarten class to create an "American-made show-and-tell."

Call it what you will — American nationalism or patriotism — it is covering the country like a Wi-Fi cloud — above the fruited plain from sea to shining sea.

Where does this rising nationalism spring from? And is it a positive or a negative trait for a country? That all depends ...  

A Sense of Selfhood

Nationalism flows through our lives every day, observes Lloyd Kramer, author of the recent book Nationalism in Europe and America.

And, like most "isms," Kramer says, nationalism carries with it both good and bad
characteristics. "When people feel committed to larger communities or interests or to ideas of
human rights and political progress, for example, nationalism can contribute to a sense of
hope about the future. It can build positive personal and collective identities and a sense of
selfhood in the modern world."

Robyn Beck/AFP/Getty Images
Festival-goer Josh Bleeker waits for the first act on the main stage at the Stagecoach Country
Music Festival, April 30 in Indio, Calif.

On the other hand, he says, "nationalism often encourages fears of all kinds of other people:
fears of other religions or races or cultures or ethnic groups or homosexuals. This fear can be
mobilized for violence and scapegoating. It can lead people to feel aggrieved and constantly
at risk."

In various ways, he adds, "nationalism can contribute to human progress and freedom and
education and economic vitality, or it can contribute to violence, fear and international
conflicts."

Nationalism, according to Kramer, is often in full flower on national holidays, during major
sports events and at public memorials for deceased military troops. And nationalistic symbols,
rituals and rhetoric are especially ramped up as the country moves toward a presidential
election.

A Political Tool?

He's not kidding.

Patriotism permeates contemporary American politics. As do accusations of unpatriotic
behavior. Of course, the word "patriot" is a subjective characterization, and most politicians
use it as code for someone who shares their beliefs.

Americans "are a patriotic people," said Mitt Romney at the recent Republican presidential
debate in Orlando. "We place our hand over our heart during the playing of the national
anthem. No other people on Earth do that." So does that mean that people who don't place
their hands over their hearts while the anthem is played are not patriots?

Speaking to a Tea Party gathering in New Hampshire on Labor Day weekend, possible
presidential candidate Sarah Palin said, "We patriots should not focus on petty political
squabbles and media game sound bites. The Tea Party has got to be focused on the broader,
much more important goals of this movement — replace Obama." Does that mean that
someone who supports the president of the United States is not a patriot?

From the Democratic angle, Texas Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, speaking recently on the Tavis
Smiley Show, suggested that members of the Tea Party should "stop being Tea Party people
instead of patriots and Americans." Does that mean a Tea Partier cannot also be a patriot and
an American?

And Rick Perry in a new Web ad intones, "We don't need a president who apologizes for
America. I believe in America. I believe in her purpose and her promise. ... God bless the United States of America.”

International Nationalism

Though the United States may have its own brand of nationalism, most countries have a strong streak of patriotic pride.

There are times when nationalism becomes more prominent on a global scale and other periods when it is displaced by other issues, says Peter Rutland, who writes the NationalismWatch blog. The last big wave was the post-Communist 1990s, when Yugoslavia became a handful of republics.

Now we are experiencing another wave, Rutland says. "The economic rise of the BRICs [Brazil, Russia, India and China] and other middle-income countries is often accompanied by nationalist assertion, China being the obvious case, also Turkey and many others."

Increased globalization, he adds, "produces a countereffect of increased national assertion, worries about the loss of identity. Then we see a new wave of democratization — starting with the color revolutions in the former Soviet Union and now the Arab spring."

He cites the book From Voting to Violence by Jack Snyder, which shows that democratization often leads "to an uptick on nationalist politics as media and political parties use nationalism as an organizing principle for the new political situation."

The Arab spring, for example, is leading to more nationalist rhetoric and possibly policy changes to follow in places like Egypt, he says. And "Turkey shows that Islamism and nationalism can go together."

— Linton Weeks

After watching that ad, CNN's Carol Costello asked: "Should patriotism be a political tool?" She then pointed out that "patriotism has worked for Democrats, too, during the 2008 campaign. Vice presidential candidate Joe Biden said wealthy Americans should pay more taxes because it's time to be patriotic."

The Patriotic Center

Patriotism, nationalism. Is there a difference?

Peter Rutland, a professor of government at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Conn., says that in the U.S., the word "nationalism" often has negative connotations. "So we talk instead about patriotism."

He says, "Other people are nationalists; we are patriots."

But for the sake of argument, the terms "nationalism" and "patriotism" are pretty much
interchangeable, Rutland says. He studies this instinct on a global level and posts observations on his NationalismWatch blog.

Rutland, Kramer and others who track nationalism point out that U.S. nationalism has swelled since 2001. Countrywide concerns about a faltering economy and a flood of immigration only intensify the notion of nationalism.

Both liberal and conservative politicians have been adapting their language, Rutland says, "to try to appeal to the patriotic median voter."

Rutland says that in light of that quest for the patriotic center, Obama's language has been particularly striking. "If you read his speech announcing his candidacy in Springfield, Ill., or his inaugural address, you see a heavy emphasis on the common national narrative — the sacrifices of Gettysburg, the legacy of past generations, etc. — classic nationalist/patriotic imagery."

Shovels To Snowshoes

That nod toward nationalism served Obama well in the 2008 election.

It has also worked for a number of business people, such as Todd Lipscomb. Not too long ago, Lipscomb was an executive in a California tech company. He lived in and traveled through Asia and the Pacific Rim for seven years. As his American company's global business increased, Lipscomb began to worry about the folks — their jobs and financial futures — back in the U.S.

Four years ago, he resigned from his company, moved home to California and launched the website Made in USA Forever. He sells products — everything from shovels to snowshoes — that are domestically manufactured.

"Stand with us to protect America's ability to produce, create jobs, and remain a world leader," the website intones.

From his home in San Clemente, Lipscomb says "sales are surging. Conversely to the economic trends, the bad news has energized my customer base."

Customers know "they are doing something real for our economy," Lipscomb says. "Every item is made here from U.S.A. components, so from the farmer that grows the cotton through every step of the way it helps our economy and creates jobs in a virtuous circle."

There are many similar sites for domestically manufactured products, including Made in USA and the Made in America store.

Lipscomb's website offers more than 2,800 products from over 480 "mostly small, family-owned business," Lipscomb says. But he adds, "Where we are weak is in electronics."

Lipscomb has written a couple of books about his experience, including Re-Made in America: How We Can Restore Jobs, Retool Manufacturing and Compete with the World. The issue of
nationalism or patriotism is not a partisan concern, he says. He has been asked to appear on Ed Shultz's progressive radio show as well as the conservative Fox & Friends national TV program.

He says his website attracts people of all stripes. "Conservatives, progressives, outdoorsmen, union members, immigrants, and many, many other groups come together on the website as Americans."

In the end, he says, "this is not a red state or blue state issue, but truly a red, white and blue one."

On 9-11, patriotism, and the U.S. flag | Psychology Today
www.psychologytoday.com/blog/.../9-11-patriotism-and-the-us-flag
Between the Lines
Perspectives on race, culture, and community.
by Mikhail Lyubansky, Ph.D.

“On 9-11, patriotism, and the U.S. flag”

September 11th reminds us to be patriotic, but what does patriotism look like?
Published on September 10, 2010 by Mikhail Lyubansky, Ph.D. in Between the Lines
This piece was originally published in 2008 on http://www.opednews.com. It was revised on 9/10/2010 for Psychology Today.

It's the eve before September 11th. Almost 10 years have passed since the September 11th -- almost 10 years since I figured out my personal meaning of patriotism. I feel a little strange writing that last sentence. I was already married and in my 30s in 2001 and already a member of the faculty at a small liberal arts college in Ohio. I'd been politically conscious for years already, and, as an immigrant, had been reflecting on what it means to be "American" since early childhood. By all accounts, you'd think that I would have grasped the notion of patriotism long before 2001. Maybe I had, but 9/11 changed everything.

A short while after the September 11th, maybe a few weeks, maybe even a few months, my parents drove from their home in Skokie, IL to visit my wife and me in rural Ohio, where we were living at the time. Along with the usual assortment of edible goodies (both store-bought and home-cooked), this time they also brought with them a large U.S. flag for us to hang outside our house, something they themselves did for the first time just a few days earlier.

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The Legacy of 9/11

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This was no small gift (all the stores in the area were sold out and there were literally no flags to be found), and knowing my parents, I well understood the spirit in which the gift was made. Like many immigrants (including myself), my parents had always felt grateful to be U.S. citizens, and given the tragedy of 9/11, I certainly understood why they and millions of other Americans wanted to display the Stars and Stripes. More than anything else, there was, at that time, a feeling of defiance. The towers may have crumbled and thousands of innocent lives may have been lost, but our nation and all that it symbolized still stood -- proud and strong, and unrepentant. The flag was a symbol of all that, a symbol of a nation that may be imperfect but nevertheless worthy of love and loyalty.

But there was something else too in that period immediately after September 11th -- a unity, a coming together of people that typically define themselves by their differences more than their similarities. The New Yorkers talked about it, but the rest of us felt it too. There was a sense of...family, a family in which the siblings constantly fight with each other at home but support and defend each other at all costs when one is attacked by someone else. "We may disagree with each other within our home," the flag seemed to say, "but when you attack one of us, you attack us all." It was a powerful symbol.

And yet, my parents’ gift lay respectfully in our garage for almost a full year, before I finally brought it out for Memorial Day. I just couldn't bring myself to hang it as long as most of the people I passed on the street (not to mention almost everyone on TV) had flag decals taped to their cars, their houses, and, so it seemed, their foreheads. Don't get me wrong -- my foreign name and immigrant status notwithstanding, I feel just as "American" as the next "American". Maybe even more so, since unlike those who were born here, I realize that I could be living somewhere else, in the country of my birth -- with its anti-Semitism, widespread corruption, and a history of disregard for civil liberties. So I'm grateful to be a U.S. citizen, grateful to my parents for having the courage to emigrate and to the Unites States for opening the doors to immigrants in general and to Russian Jews in particular. As a child, I loved learning about my new country's history, and I still get occasionally teary-eyed when I think of certain historical events and their contribution to this nation's ideals. These ideals make me feel proud to be here, proud to be an American, proud to live in a nation that values life, liberty, and free will.

But U.S. history has blemishes too -- embarrassing, humiliating, shameful events and decisions, including the forceful displacement of the indigenous peoples, the enslavement of Africans, the internment of Japanese Americans, and, in the weeks, months, and now years after 9-11, the impulsive call for revenge, the imprisonment without any formal charges of countless foreign nationals, the deception about Iraq's threat and the corresponding, damn-the-United-Nations-we-do-whatever-the-hell-we-want invasion of Iraq, which has probably increased anti-American resentment among Middle-East Arabs and Muslims ten-fold.

What did it mean to fly the U.S. flag in 2001? Or, say, during the Presidential campaign of 2008? Did it mean that we love our country? That we supported our soldiers? That we
agreed with the administration's foreign and domestic policies? What if we didn't agree? Did that make us unpatriotic?

"Stop Trying To Hijack Patriotism" Photo by Stephen Poff

To listen to many Republicans back then, being a patriot meant to love our country no matter what it (i.e., the government) does, to accept it just as it is, to not be critical of its policies or its leaders. And yeah, to dutifully recite the Pledge of Allegiance during the '08 campaign (which Obama did) and wear a little American-flag pin at all times (which he did not). And therein lies the problem. Under such a definition, there is no meaningful distinction between love of country and love of a particular administration. Criticizing the latter then becomes the equivalent of disliking (even hating) the former -- which of course makes criticism of any sort beyond the pale, which of course makes Barack Obama and every other non-Republican willing to criticize the administration "unpatriotic."

At the Democratic National Convention, Obama defended his patriotism:

...one of the things that we have to change in our politics is the idea that people cannot disagree without challenging each other's character and patriotism. The times are too serious, the stakes are too high for this same partisan playbook. So let us agree that patriotism has no party. I love this country, and so do you, and so does John McCain. The men and women who serve in our battlefields may be Democrats and Republicans and Independents, but they have fought together and bled together and some died together under the same proud flag. They have not served a Red America or a Blue America - they have served the United States of America. So I've got news for you, John McCain. We all put our country first.

His remarks, delivered in characteristic eloquence, were right on target, but didn't go nearly far enough.

Patriotism may not have a national party, but it does have a national purpose: not to accept, not to maintain, but to improve. This is what I realized back in 2001, as I listened and watched with horror as practically all mainstream journalists and a good number of my faculty colleagues -- the very people who should have been providing a critical perspective on the newly declared war on terror and the planned invasion of Iraq -- willingly and actively supported the Bush administration or, at the least, stood idly by on the grounds that it was not patriotic (and therefore inappropriate) to be critical of our government at a time of war.

"Dissent is Patriotic" From a car on the Upper West side of New York City. Photo by David Neubert

But, really, dissent is always patriotic, perhaps never more so than during a time of war, because this is precisely when honest and legitimate criticism is needed the most. To engage in it, to say "because I love my country, I refuse to accept its faults and problems and will do what it takes to (legally) change it for the better." is not unpatriotic. To the contrary, it is the kind of patriotism our nation was founded on and, in my view after 9-11, the only kind worth celebrating. This may seem obvious today when taking potshots at the President seems to be the national pasttime, but it somehow seems conveniently forgotten every time there's a Republican administration