AGAINST PARANOID NATIONALISM

Searching for hope in a shrinking society

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Against paranoid nationalism: searching for hope in a shrinking society. This book addresses very topical issues being raised in the public agenda and the media - relating directly to our government and its obsession with security and border control and the more global effect of capitalism and the social consequences of this trend.

Hage pleads with society to embrace their minorities as fully human; to fail to do so is to negate society’s own humanity. While I have great respect for Hage’s argument and wish everyone would read and take to heart his book I also personally see us as less swayed by “ideas” than by “genetics” — we need to study our evolutionary heritage to understand our current mass and personal psychologies and work as much with that as with ethical truisms. Oh, and one more image I have held with me from this book ever since I first read it at the time of its publication — it’s an image that tells us how I have argued that this paranoid nationalism is primarily the product of ‘the decline of hope’ in an era where the dynamics of capital accumulation no longer produces mere inequalities within society, but endangers the very idea of a national society. In Australia, however, these structural factors did not create a culture of paranoia out of thin air. As I will argue in this chapter, there is a history of White paranoia in Australian culture which has structured Australian nationalism from the time of its birth. Since the early post-World War II era, however, there have been economic