

## **Kim Scott talks about identity in *Kayang and Me***

'I also worry that being told to be proud of your Indigenous identity, especially without an informed historical perspective and relying only on empirical evidence - the legacy of that history of oppression - can mean being trapped in a reactive loop.

In wanting to affirm your identity and wanting confirmation of it, you perpetuate too much of the way things are now, and an Indigenous identity can even come to mean *don't* achieve, *don't* succeed, because success is associated with a "white" identity.

That stridently political imperative to declare yourself one or the other - Noongar or *wadjela* - asks firstly for commitment, and if the answer is Noongar, implies not only dialogue and engagement with other Noongars, but also their affirmation. Shrill self-assertion is not enough and it's not necessarily a comfortable or clear-cut process. ...

These are all terms that have appeared in my lifetime in response to changing legislation that means declaring your Aboriginality may mean gaining access to a range of "positive discrimination" policies and even employment in the Indigenous bureaucracy. For many of us, such employment is a way of supporting other Indigenous people and working for social justice; it's also a way of affirming our identity and even of being an "activist".'

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