

Submission to Yoorrook Justice Commission**From: Tony Ford****Dated: 3 November 2024****Submission:****What do you know about the colonisation of Victoria and its impacts on First Peoples?**

I spent five years learning and writing about the Aboriginal people who were the custodians of the Waranga area. I am astonished at the speed of dispossession in that area - pretty much complete in the years 1838-1853 - and all the attendant issues that created.

What has been your experience learning about First Nations history and culture in Victoria's education system? Do you feel it was comprehensive?

I'm 71, so I got nothing in my formal education. It was all about "explorers" and colonists. Hopefully that has changed.

What changes would you like to see in Victoria to promote better understanding and respect for First People's?

Things I have tried that have worked - Regular articles in a community newspaper with the OK of Elders Weaving classes where the emphasis is on story telling, but it also promotes culture.

In what ways do you think non-First Nations Victorians can contribute to the process of truth-telling and treaty?

The above is what I am doing, plus taking a great interest in all things related to Aboriginal culture. Listening. Understanding and acknowledging the true history of colonisation. Treaty - I think one of the big challenges is catering for the diversity of the various Aboriginal groups within Victoria. At the moment, the RAPs dominate. What about the minority voices?

END OF SUBMISSION