

Submission to Yoorrook Justice Commission**From: Anonymous 1078****Dated: 4 November 2024****Submission:**

I am a white Australian primarily of Scottish decent, and I am 26 years old. I do not have a direct injustice of a particular person to share, but more an erasure of indigenous Victorians / koori people as presented through the education system. When I was a kid, and even into my teenage years, I embarrassingly did not know that there were indigenous Victorians. I had some idea that there had been indigenous victorians at were indigenous Victorians. I had some idea that there had been indigenous victorians at some point, but I was under the impression that they were gone... like they moved somewhere else. Or maybe there were indigenous people in regional Victoria, but not in the city. I was brought up to be aware that indigenous people faced injustices and were murdered by colonists. I thought that maybe all the indigenous people in Victoria had perished. All education about indigenous people was surface level. We did learn some good things - in year 9 I remember learning about the Frontier Wars and the civil rights movement of the 60s, but they always centred stories from other parts of Australia, not here. At formal events there would be an acknowledgement of country, acknowledging the Wurundjeri people... but who were they? I thought this was some acknowledgement of a people that maybe didn't exist anymore because we never EVER heard anything about them except in passing in a cookie cutter acknowledgement. My school would employ a man to play the didgeridoo at a yearly formal concert, and we would all give him high fives, but I assumed he was from someplace else. As an adult (possibly an older teenager) I quickly learnt that there in fact ARE indigenous Victorians. I have gone on my own mission to learn the history of Aboriginal Victorians, the history of oppression in Victoria. It's similar to the oppression in other states, but there is still a distinct history here that I think should be shared. When reading one of the books I read I actually found out that a building at my brother's school used to be a home for Koori girls back in the day - a history which was not acknowledged by the school. The building was literally called 'Black Hall'. It is definitely partially my own fault that I didn't know, but I also think that the education system does an injustice to indigenous Victorians by completely omitting them from curriculum. I seriously think, how could I not know?? was I crazy? The education surrounding indigenous people and the injustices they faced is so general it flattens indigenous people into this homogenous, abstract being, and positions all oppression as something that happened in the past. I'd like to think that kids today are more informed, but who knows. I think that treaty is important for many reasons, but to this particular point I think that it will centre Indigenous Victorians in the present and not only the past.

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