

Submission to Yoorrook Justice Commission**From: Anonymous 1106****Dated: 1 November 2024****Submission:****What do you know about the colonisation of Victoria and its impacts on First Peoples?**

I am coming to understand the trauma of colonisation, that it was not only land that was taken from First Nations peoples. Culture, language, community, family, a sense of purpose, the entire structure of society was taken. Additionally generations have watched the destruction of Country in just a few short centuries, and simultaneously suffer the denigration of their knowledge and ways that nurtured and worked in harmony with Country for tens of thousands of years.

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

I went to school in the 80s and 90s. My school celebrated the bicentennial. I learned that Captain Cook "discovered" Australia. I learned about Terra Nullius, Burke and Wills and other "great explorers" and "pioneers". I learned almost nothing about First Nations peoples beyond stories in the news about petrol sniffing and crime. My education was absolutely white washed. My daughter is 9 years old and is learning more in school than I ever did. She is teaching me about First Nations culture.

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

More naming of local sites in First Languages. First Languages taught in public school. Frontier Wars as part of the school curriculum. Frontier Wars as part of our remembrance days and war memorials. A public holiday during NAIDOC Week or for Mabo Day. Better representation of First Peoples in government, teaching positions, police and other public offices. Local news programs opening with an acknowledgement of Country. Part of all stamp duty payments going to First Nations organisations (Pay The Rent)

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

We should all listen. The outcomes of the Yoorrook Justice Commission should be reported on the news, in the papers, on social media so all Victorians hear what is being uncovered. We should all know and accept the truth.

In what ways could First Peoples history and culture be promoted in Victoria?

Every major cultural event in Melbourne should open and close with a First Nations float/act/performer/MC/artist/band/musician. Always was, always will be.

END