

Submission to Yoorrook Justice Commission**From: Anonymous 1129****Dated: 5 November 2024****Submission:****What do you know about the colonisation of Victoria and its impacts on First Peoples?**

I know victoria is an illegal occupation that was designated and setup as the first military outpost of britain. I know it is still a military outpost of britain, particularly considering the weapons factories that are located here that supply bullets that are used by the police against First Peoples. I know that there is still a war going on and that all colonisers and settlers are active participants in this war.

I know that boundary road, a road I used to drive down to get to school, marked the line that First peoples could not cross. I know that Victoria, as it currently functions, upholds an apartheid state and is committing an active genocide against First Peoples. This is through both direct violence and administrative violence that now is a main form of colonialism.

I know that there were massacres committed all over the state, by the mounted police and settlers including the massacre and removal of Bunnurong, Tungurong, Wurundjeri, Dja Dja Wurrung and Yorta Yorta peoples into Corrundurk concentration camp. I know that many First Peoples resistance fighters were killed and this was justified through colonial law.

I know that today, the victorian government still operates as this colonial government, with its' main intention being the eradication and continued theft of the lands of the Kulin nations for profits. I know that First Peoples have consistently resisted genocide, through spiritual and armed resistance. I know that First Peoples law has been severely impacted. I know that colonisation being perpetuated by the state of victoria works in tandem with the colonisation and active genocides being comitted by the israeli occupation, both through weapons but also through sharing information and tactics.

For example, Mark leibler best friends with netanyahu is heralded as a fighter for Indigenous rights despite being a proponent and active force behind the genocide and illegal settlement in palestine. I know that leibler's law firm is practicing administrative colonialism on First Peoples here and trying to absolve sovereignty into colonial legal systems through the voice, and by being in control of the tax office, native title ect.

I know that First Nations children are being stolen at a higher rate than ever, both through colonial posturing as protective services and through incarceration.

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

I did not really learn anything about First Nations history in high school. I learnt a tiny bit in history class but nothing memorable and nothing that left me with an understanding of colonialism or the true nature of australia as an occupying entity. Nor my place in it. It wasn't until I decided to take an Indigenous studies astronomy class at university which I was priveleged enough to attend that I began to understand how everything that I had been taught was basically a lie, and that even down to the stars it had been re-written and I had been

brainwashed to never know. It is completely inaccessible, by design, that this brainwashing is upheld through things like the stopping of truth-telling ect.

However, all it took for this to start to be undone for me was 12 hours total of classes. In the classes we were introduced to colonization, not through theory or politics, but by going outside and being shown by Elders that the stars trees animals and plants were not as we had grown up to know. That they were in fact old systems of knowledge and science. I learnt about songlines and this completely changed my life. I learnt about how the highways once were songlines. At this point however ,I still didn't have an understanding of my active role in colonisation as a settler, but I was interested in this enormous unquantifiable knowledge systems that was something so elaborate that I had never encountered before. Then I took some more classes that focused on art, gender studies and politics, that allowed a deeper dive into things like race theory and intersectional feminism and abolition.

The next class i took was about Indigenous women and colonisation and it introduced me to abolition which was the perfect introduction for me as I had already been passionate about feminisim, but it showed me that again I had been misled and taught that white feminism was great... After this I began to comprehend the magnitude of how the things that I was learning was inherent to my existence as a british coloniser (I don't like to say settler because it sounds to peaceful). I did my own learning and reading and now understand that learning will come from being around the fire. Victoria's education system was not only below comprehensive, but purposefully designed to be such. I think I was lucky to have this education and be exposed to the knowledge and wisdom of Elders and knowledge holders, rather than it be testament to the education system itself.

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

This education system, like the learning that I was exposed to should absolutely be the norm. Indigenous studies in depth, not just addressing history, but addressing theories and understandings of race and colonisation should be taught from young. It is so dangerous not having this, as it allows colonisers like me to perpetually occupy a violent position, regardless of whether I want to or not. My identity is built on genocide, and I believe my education and teaching that I am exposed to should be there to understand and resist that. I would like to see a greater understanding that the police, and victorian legal system as a system of british occupation have no jurisdiction on the land, nor does it have jurisdiction over First Peoples.

The true law of the land is Bunjil's law and these are the legal systems that should be respected and abided by, for the betterment of everybody. Governance should be returned entirely to First Nations peoples, who know best the land and how to exist on it. There should immediately be a cessation of funding for weapons and reparations should be paid to all First Peoples. The reparations that have been seen in other states, when broken down, equates to about \$2 a day for years of unpaid labour. This is unacceptable particularly when spending over 7 billion on two submarines that will never be used. I would like to see First Nations history respected and visible more in public places, like monuments to massacre sites so that people know what happened on the land and healing can occur. I want less governmental policies and more funding for community sites. I would like the police defunded completely and funder for inter-communal systems of accountability and true support that is founded on Indigenous ways of relationality and accountability to self, community and land. I would like funding going from

weapons to language revitalisation programs and culture centre being built at the Camp Sovereignty site for First Nations peoples to have freedom to practice culture.

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

I think it's so important that settlers contribute to this conversation, particularly to understanding how we continue to contribute to ongoing genocide. We should be learning massacre sites, histories of resistance and we need to become comfortable talking about these things together. We cannot truly know ourselves without these understandings of history, and I for one do not want an identity that is foundational to and formed by extreme violence, holocausts and mass extermination of all living things. There is no positive future that can come from this. We need to be able to talk about these things in order to heal.

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

Treaty first. There should be a complete transition of governance from the british occupying entity AKA victorian government, to the traditional owners of the Kulin Nations. The land should be returned and full use of it should be dictated by the traditional owners. There needs to stop being a promotion of First Peoples history and culture as tokenistic acknowledgments and reconciliation narratives, and an actual transfer of tangible power structures to the legal systems that exist here. Under the international laws of war, any occupation must be temporary and the sovereignty of the occupied parties remains. Because there was never a treaty, this war is still ongoing, and the occupation still needs to end. All british governance is illegal under international law as well as the laws of the land and should immediately end.

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