

Submission to Yoorrook Justice Commission**From: Anonymous 1142****Dated: 8 November 2024****Submission:****What do you know about the colonisation of Victoria and its impacts on First Peoples?**

Colonisation has resulted in inequity, racism and the disruption of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. It has been the most detrimental of the determinants of health that continues to significantly influence Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes today. In 1788, there was an estimated Indigenous population of 750,000 people in Australia when the first British fleet entered the coastline of Warrange, now known as Sydney. Contrary to what many Australians think, Aboriginal people actively resisted the British invasion of Australia right from the beginning. Up until as recently as 1960, thousands of Aboriginal people (including women and children) were also massacred while going about their daily lives. Between 1910 and 1970, many Indigenous children were taken from their families and 'assimilated' into non-Indigenous homes or placed under State care. These children are known as the 'Stolen Generations' and many are still searching for their families today. Many Indigenous Australians were segregated from other Australians and relocated to missions and reserves. Up until 1967, Indigenous Australians weren't counted in the government census.

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

My schooling years from 1985 to 1998 had little to no coverage of First Nations history and culture.

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

I would welcome some ground truthing of the 1788 story, and the resulting impacts of colonisation to this day. This was a defining moment that forever altered the trajectory of thousands of years of cultural history, custom and Country practices.

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

Our first role is to listen respectfully. A greater understanding of privilege, and the unearned benefits and advantages that stem from colonisation and the White Australia policy.

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

We are universally connected by the human experience. And storytelling is the glue that connects generation after generation. Encourage storytelling, rather than Acknowledgement of Country by non-Indigenous Australians. Learn about the Country you are gathering on, and lean into its stories of place, people and culture.

END OF SUBMISSION