

Submission to Yoorrook Justice Commission**From: Lin Oke****Dated: 31 October 2024****Submission:****What do you know about the colonisation of Victoria and its impacts on First Peoples?**

It was only towards the end of the last Century (ie 1990s) and the beginning of this Century that I became far more aware of the extent of the atrocities committed by the early settlers as well as the various governments and police troops, as well as the spread of fatal illnesses. I must admit, I don't know specific details of where and when. But I am now aware of: massacres; practices like "a shilling an ear"; forcing communities into missions and restricting visitors and travel to and from; banning communicating in their languages.

What has been your experience learning about First Nations history and culture in Victoria's education system?

Do you feel it was comprehensive? I was at high school in the late 1950s - early 60s - we were not taught anything about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history or culture. My parents were activists and hosted a number of meetings where Aboriginal leaders spoke out - so I began my journey listening and learning.

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

It would be wonderful if every town had an Elder in Residence (appropriately remunerated) who could speak at schools, at events in the town, provide advice to the local Council.

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

I suppose the best way is to be the audience listening and learning from the truth telling and in regards to treaty - again listening and where appropriate making suggestions and advocating.

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

Apart from markers and recorded stories at significant locations, maybe a special Indigenous museum could be created to illustrate the Victoria wide history and cultural ways.

END OF SUBMISSION