

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

I know that Victoria was invaded by the British and its Aboriginal people robbed of their lands, and treated badly. Children were stolen and their ownership of Victoria completely disregarded. Men and women were killed, enslaved and deceived. The first European settlement was in Portland. At Milaw (Phillip Island) the local Aboriginal people were forced off their lands. It's a little known history to this day.

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

No, I don't think it was comprehensive. We were taught that Captain Cook discovered Australia and we assumed that it was a happy transition to European settlement. We did not understand about the extent of atrocities directed at the Aboriginal people and unpleasant actions towards them were whitewashed. In my early adult years, through my own reading and interest, it became clear that I had been deceived by our education system.

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

I think that most people in the city's and some country towns have no interaction with Aboriginal people. The welcome to country ceremony and Aboriginal art is the most that is understood of their culture. Elders visiting schools would be an improvement. There is a strong perception that Aboriginal people get too much welfare and that contributes to resentment. Name changes from European names to traditional names and recognition of local history of our indigenous people. E.g. at Bernenheit, which is the Phillip Island cultural and historical centre, there is no Aboriginal history relating to the impact of European settlement on the Aboriginal people.

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

Understanding that the truth is not always pleasant. A willingness to listen and learn what treaty means.

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

Through schools, starting from early years. Festivals, music, art, film, documentaries and tourism.

**END OF SUBMISSION**