

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

I know what I have set out to learn as an adult. This is from settler records of colonisation and seeking out stories of the impact of colonisation. Much remains hidden and not discussed. Listening to First Peoples who share their stories has been key.

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

It was not at all comprehensive. I was born in 1974 and it was not until university, learning about the Mabo judgement that the penny dropped for me that where I lived was and had always been Aboriginal land. I remember going home and asking my parents - why didn't they tell me. I don't think they appreciated the truth either.

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

It starts with learning about how we came to be here - teaching colonisation and its impacts not just on Australia but around the world. We have all been impacted by it and need to learn our own history. Then share and get to know the history of the place you live. Who are the custodians? What are the stories of this place? If you choose to live as part of this land what's your role in caring for it? Who can you learn from? The role of government in this is key to provide an authorising environment for the work to occur. To hold steady on its importance so it's not undermined by populist broadsheet rubbish.

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

By doing the work and research themselves. It's not good enough to say you weren't taught at school. Go and find the information for yourself. It is there and easily accessible. Listen to the evidence being shared through Yoorrook. Ask your local council about how they will support treaty. Get involved in your organisations RAP. speak to the benefits of this process to everyone you can.

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

Government at all levels need to support it to make it more visible. This includes simple things like local signage and celebrations of history and culture. Organisations must play a role as well and much can be done through RAPs. A public holiday that celebrates it - rather than a day that represents an attempt at its destruction.

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