

Submission to Yoorrook Justice Commission**From:** Sian Prior**Dated:** November 2024**Submission:**

I am sixty years old: white, economically secure, fully employed, healthy, never incarcerated, and many years of (mostly) free education. I am living on stolen land. I am benefitting from that theft. It isn't right and it isn't fair. I know, from paying attention, that I live in a country in which being a First Nations citizen almost inevitably means: you are subject to daily instances of racism, covert and overt; you are likely to have much worse health outcomes and much shorter life expectancy than the majority; you are more likely to be poor; you are less likely to complete secondary or tertiary education; you may have been part of the Stolen Generation, and/or your parents and/or grandparents were stolen; you are more likely to have suffered physical and sexual abuse; you are more likely to have had your wages stolen; you are more likely to have insecure housing, or be homeless; I could go on and on, but you know all this. It is enraging. It is unconscionable. Most Australian are in denial about these many forms of injustice, some because of ignorance, some because they don't care, some because they swallow untruths disseminated by racists individuals, politicians, institutions, corporations and media outlets. We need the Truth to be told, to be heard, to be spread far and wide. We need a Treaty which acknowledges that sovereignty was never ceded. We need to acknowledge that First Nations people come from a living culture that is over 60000 years old, and that we could all learn vital lessons about living sustainably from that culture. Most of us are aware of the many First Nations sportspeople, artists, musicians, writers and politicians who have contributed immeasurably to Australian life. Imagine how many more First Nations people could make more incredible contributions if we gave self-determination to their communities so they could close the gap. We need to allocate more funding to enable that selfdetermination. What about a percentage of land tax for Truth,Treaty, Justice, SelfDetermination? It wouldn't involve returning all the stolen land but it would be an apt source of ongoing financial support for First Nations people. Thank you for this opportunity to share my opinions on this matter of vital state and national importance.

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