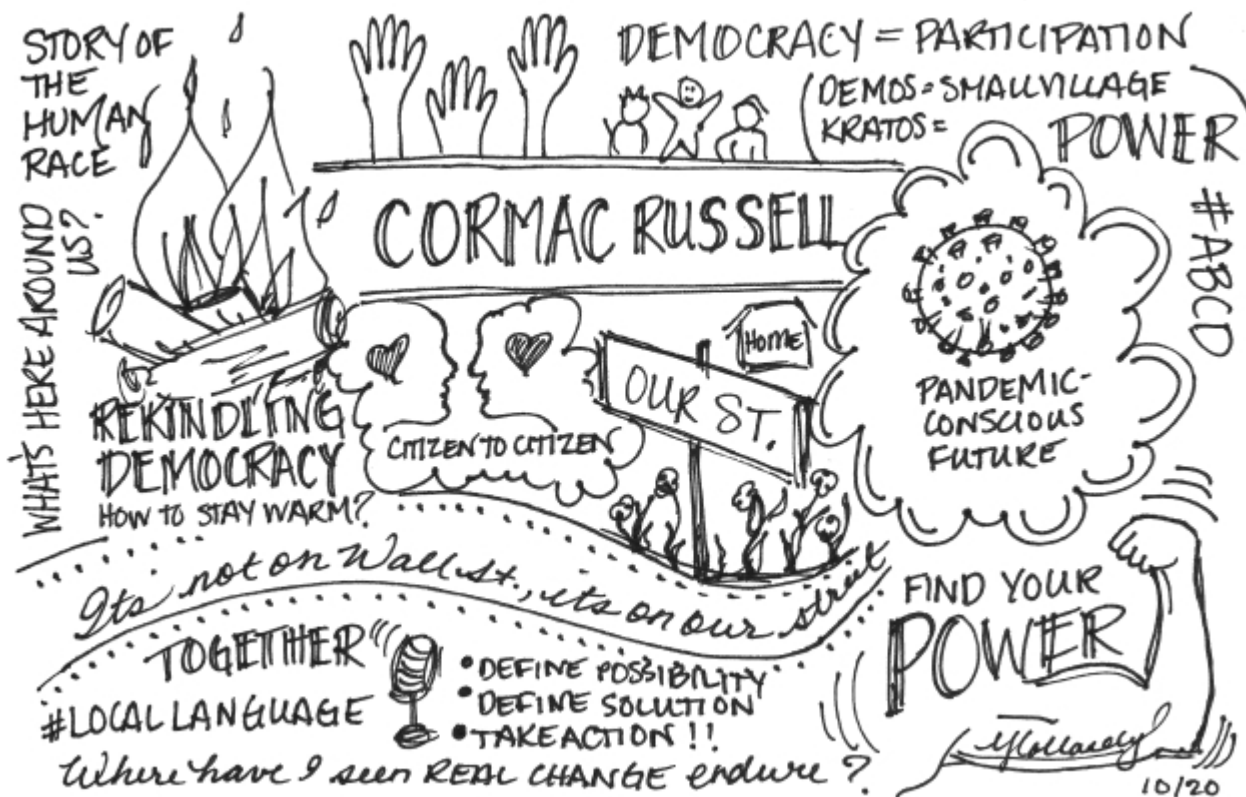


Deeper Democracy the Antidote in Pandemic-Conscious Future

Image



Things are not getting worse, they are getting clearer: Cormac Russell

Ever since members of the human race have commenced settlements and domesticated animals as a feature of organizing society, issues like COVID-19 have been present. Cormac Russell, author of [Rekindling Democracy](#), says there has been at least a decade-long awareness that we would be contending with pandemics.

The encroachment on the planet has consequences. As we scale up and we cut

deeper into the Amazon rainforest, etcetera, there are fallouts for all of us, he says.

“We are in a context and in a time when our awareness one way or the other is forced towards a pandemic-conscious future, the limits of what institutions can do about that, and among other things, an economically grim decade ahead,” he says.

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In *Rekindling Democracy*, Cormac makes the case that, “if you’re waiting for the ‘big man’ to get his act together so he can come and save you, or do no harm to you, you’re going to be disappointed. So, you’d better get organized, you’d better find your power. And you’d better find ways of keeping yourself and other people safe. It’s its neighbour-to-neighbour, citizen-to-citizen, where our greatest hope is.”

Cormac calls for a deeper democracy. One well beyond current politics and systems for voting. He says voting could be seen as an act of giving your power away rather than actually exercising it.

At the heart of it is the participation of every person in the human story.

Representation and participation are two different things.

How do we, instead, participate in embodied, adaptive, and agile ways?

The first step is knowing and naming the possibilities. How do we together, and using our own local language, define the possibilities for ourselves? Then given the possibilities and problems, what are good ways to adapt? And finally, we must take collective ownership and responsibility for possibility and take action to bring it into the world.

“It can be kind of scary. Suddenly, we’re confronted with our own power. There is a whole pile of stuff to do, and if we don’t do it, it’s not going to get done. It’s up to us. There is no deity, no demon that is going to determine our fate and our future. It’s up to us. Doesn’t that push upon us a great deal of responsibility? There’s also the power in community,” he says.

There is response-ability.

“It’s our power that frightens the heck out of us. It’s not our weakness. Because my god, you know, if we have power, what now, what, then?”

“I’m challenging the sleeping citizen, and the sleeping community within our neighbourhoods, within our villages and our place and saying, ‘Wake up. Things are getting clearer, things are not getting worse.’ But there is a calling here, you know, and we need to figure out how to respond,” he says.

In this first part of a two-part podcast conversation, Cormac Russell opens the door to a deeper definition of democracy than we’re used to. This article is a weaving of some the insights shared during our conversation.

To read and listen to part two of this conversation, visit: [A Lot Would Open Up If We Quit Over-Reaching](#)

Listen to this and other [Axiom News Podcasts on Spotify](#).

You can learn more about Cormac Russell and his work at [Nurture Development](#) and [Rekindling Democracy](#).