

## Women's Climate Congress — Zoom Book Club, September 2021

### ***Full Circle: A search for the world that comes next* by Scott Ludlum**

Report by Jenny Robinson

Our Zoom Book Club met to discuss Scott Ludlum's book *Full Circle: A search for the world that comes next*. His visionary book drew diverse opinions from participants over two meetings, Mondays 30 August and 6 September.

Refreshingly, members came with a range of knowledge and insights into Scott Ludlum (a member of the Australian Greens and former Senator for WA) and his book. While some participants had finished reading this book, most were still on his journey while others, unable to access the book, relied on multimedia interviews and reports to form their opinions. By and large, the overall consensus was that Scott Ludlum's book is truly unique, ambitious, challenging and authentic to his experience as a Senator and activist. A minority found his geo-historical descriptions — describing the birth of the Earth and indeed life itself to the Anthropocene age—very detailed and dense. Others found the weaving in and out of this form with present day commentary on his themes very clever, like spiralling DNA strands.

Spending a year travelling the globe, researching grassroots activists, Ludlum describes what he identifies as an emerging post-capitalist economics, and investigates everything from systems theory to community activism. Ordinary people are showcased who stand up to large corporations. Ludlum invites readers 'to lean in and help shape the next turn of the wheel'. He encourages everyone to take up the challenge, big or small, and to start now.

The main theme of the book is on irreversible climate change. Ludlum draws our attention to the developed world's financial and political systems that have led us here through exploitation of the earth's resources, and the horrifying suggestion that 99 percent of the world's population are working for the wealthy 1 percent. He compellingly describes consumerism and the industrial growth economy. He tells a story called 'coins of the Anthropocene', a coin-doubling game, that leads to capitalist societies burning through fossil fuels at an eye-watering rate. Hand-in-hand with the consumer acceleration are the power dynamics of the fossil fuel industry. These corporations have increasingly lobbied and funded governments to hold power, which he calls 'State Capture', thus diluting the voice and impact of the voters.

Ludlum finds hope in the power of social movements, citing rebellions throughout history and opportunities for our current climate urgency. He believes that when billions of tiny actions by individuals and small groups coalesce into one great movement then this has the potential to transform history.

*Full Circle* outlines a new ecological politics: a 'world that comes next: post-capitalism built at the intersection of radical democracy, regenerative economics and First Nations sovereignty.'

Have you read *Full Circle*?

If so, what did you think? How are these ideas relevant for the Women's Climate Congress? Does the language and underlying assumptions help or hinder the opening up of common ground across current political divides?

Is there a book you would recommend for our Book Club?

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