

ACCOMPANYING

Pathways to Social Change

Staughton Lynd

In *Accompanying*, Staughton Lynd distinguishes two strategies of social change. The first, characteristic of the 1960s Movement in the United States, is "organizing." The second, articulated by Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador, is "accompaniment." The critical difference is that in accompanying one another the promoter of social change and his or her oppressed colleague view themselves as two experts, each bringing indispensable experience to a shared project. Together, as equals, they seek to create what the Zapatistas call "another world."

Staughton Lynd applies the distinction between organizing and accompaniment to five social movements in which he has taken part: the labor and civil rights movements, the antiwar movement, prisoner insurgencies, and the movement sparked by Occupy Wall Street. His wife Alice Lynd, a partner in these efforts, contributes her experience as a draft counselor and advocate for prisoners in maximum-security confinement.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Staughton Lynd taught American history at Spelman College and Yale University. He was director of Freedom Schools in the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Summer. An early leader of the movement against the Vietnam War, he was blacklisted and unable to continue as an academic. He then became a lawyer, and in this capacity has assisted rank-and-file workers and prisoners for the past thirty years. He has written, edited, or co-edited with his wife Alice Lynd more than a dozen books.

ACCOLADES

"Since our dreams for a more just world came crashing down around us in the late 1980s and early 1990s, those of us involved in social activism have spent much of the time since trying to assess what went wrong and what we might learn from our mistakes. In this highly readable book, Lynd explores the difference between organizing and accompanying. This book is a must read for anyone who believes a better world is possible."

—Margaret Randall

"Everything that Staughton Lynd writes is original and provocative. This little book is no exception. Among his greatest contributions on display here is the transformation of the 'organizer' and 'organized' into a collaboration of different people with different skills, each making a decisive contribution."

—Paul Buhle, author of *Robin Hood: People's Outlaw and Forest Hero*

"*Accompanying* is arguably the most thoughtful examination of Archbishop Oscar Romero's concept of accompaniment insofar as it helps us to understand how liberation theology matured from taking a 'preferential option for the poor' to companionship with the poor as they organize themselves... This legacy flows into the Occupy Movement today when it reclaims foreclosed homes, and occupies banks and spaces collectively and spontaneously. This book would be important at any moment in history, but is indispensable today as we accompany one another in the quest to free ourselves from the shackles of the world the 1 percent has inflicted on us."

—Carl Mirra, Associate Professor of Education, Adelphi University, and author of *The Admirable Radical: Staughton Lynd and Cold War Dissent, 1945–1970*

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