



# **Bridging the Class Divide: And Other Lessons for Grassroots Organizing**

*Linda Stout*

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## **Bridging the Class Divide: And Other Lessons for Grassroots Organizing** Linda Stout

Again and again social change movements--on matters from the environment to women's rights--have been run by middle-class leaders. But in order to make real progress toward economic and social change, poor people--those most affected by social problems--must be the ones to speak up and lead.

It can be done. Linda Stout herself grew up in poverty in rural North Carolina and went on to found one of this country's most successful and innovative grassroots organizations, the Piedmont Peace Project. Working for peace, jobs, health care, and basic social services in North Carolina's conservative Piedmont region, the project has attracted national attention for its success in drawing leadership from within a working-class community, actively encouraging diversity, and empowering people who have never had a voice in policy decisions to speak up for their own interests. The Piedmont Peace Project demonstrates that new ways of organizing can really work.

*Bridging the Class Divide* tells the inspiring story of Linda Stout's life as the daughter of a tenant farmer, as a self-taught activist, and as a leader in the progressive movement. It also gives practical lessons on how to build real working relationships between people of different income levels, races, and genders. This book will inspire and enrich anyone who works for change in our society.

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