

**FROM "BACKWARDNESS"
TO "AT-RISK"**

**Childhood Learning Difficulties and the
Contradictions of School Reform**

Barry M. Franklin

"Barry M. Franklin's history of low-achieving, troubled, innocent children is sometimes chilling. For all their ostensible attempts to help children, America's public schools have frequently clipped the wings of youth. With a poet's eye but historian's sensibility, Franklin deftly recovers missing pages of the past. He provides the reader with valuable historical perspective on current policy debates on at-risk children." — From the Foreword by William J. Reese

This book examines the joint effort of twentieth-century public school administrators and private philanthropy to initiate reforms to provide for children with learning difficulties. The author explores the development of these reforms from the establishment of special classes for backward children at the beginning of the century to the creation of programs for learning disabled children. He considers what this history tells us about current efforts to provide for at-risk students. He looks at both the way school administrators conceptualized childhood learning difficulties and the institutional arrangements which they introduced to accommodate these students, and pays particular attention to the preference of school administrators throughout this century for accommodating low achieving children in segregated classes and programs.

Barry M. Franklin is Associate Professor of Education in the School of Education at Kennesaw State College. He is the author of *Building the American Community: The School Curriculum and the Search for Social Control* and is the editor of *Learning Disability: Dissenting Essays*.

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READING PAULO FREIRE

His Life and Work

Moacir Gadotti

"This book deals with one of the most important educators of this century. It presents the work and life of Paulo Freire in a simple, straightforward fashion. By placing the life and work of Freire in the context of history of ideas, the book introduces the reader to the complexities of Freire's pedagogical and epistemological position. The book is accessible, and will be welcome particularly by those who may have difficulties reading Paulo Freire. It does what it promises: makes Paulo Freire available to a wide readership. Likewise, the book discusses a pedagogical approach that is still evolving and has tremendous vibrancy for contemporary research and teaching. Professor Gadotti has captured this dimension in Freire's work better than many other scholars I have read." — Carlos Alberto Torres, UCLA

"The topic is profoundly significant. Educators and intellectuals cannot talk today of literacy and education without reading this piece. The book is important in itself as well as central to educational and literacy studies. This is an important contribution—meaningfully thorough and intellectually stimulating. What I like most about the book is its ability to capture the originality and simultaneous growth in complexity of Paulo Freire's life and work." — Hermán S. García, New Mexico State University

The author follows a chronological line in which life and work are naturally mixed. In many cases, he lets Paulo Freire's work speak for itself.

Maocir Gadotti is one of the closest collaborators of Paulo Freire. He has worked together with him for almost 20 years. Recently, he was Chief of Cabinet when Paulo Freire was Secretary of Education of the city of São Paulo. At present, he is Professor of Education at the University of São Paulo and Director of the Paulo Freire Institute.

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