Frank A. Pattie, PhD:  
In Memoriam  
William E. Edmonston, Jr.

Two letters in one day. Both from Lexington, Kentucky. The first had the return address of Cacklewood Chicken Ranch (Poultry in Motion), the other, Institute of Stereomammography. Inside the first was the following: “For several months I’ve been in great demand for parties because of my impersonation and claiming it shows disrespect for the Royal Family.” The second in Mexico and a newspaper clipping signed: “Mitzi Rouault.”

Both letters had come from my mentor and, later good friend, Frank Acklen Pattie, whose nonacademic talents and interests complimented his professional endeavors, which themselves were extensive. One might little suppose that the man who discovered that Mesmer had plagiarized much of his dissertation from Richard Mead and was the first to translate this same document from the original Latin into French would have had the time and energy also to regale his friends with dry humor and piercing satire.

The return addresses on his correspondence alone made for many an evening of chuckles, ranging from Infundibulum Sapientiae through simply, International headquarters. When Frank Pattie wrote letters to the editor he wrote under a number of pen names, including Frank Bugbane, Mitzi Rouault, Ralph Waldo Ginzburg and Violet Hammerschlag. Occasionally, I would receive a postcard from him prominently marked: CONFIDENTIAL! Perhaps that’s why his postcards always seemed to take longer to arrive than did his letters.

It was as one of his doctoral students that I first got to know Frank Pattie. He was, as we all now know, one of a handful of individuals who did so much to revitalize an interest in hypnosis among academicians, and one of the first psychologists to study hypnosis clinically and experimentally. His experimental approach to induced sensory changes during hypnosis was of single importance in the early decades of the last century. Dr. Pattie, as I then called him, introduced me to hypnosis through the Seminars on Hypnosis and later the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis, both organizations of which he was one of the founders. He is a past president of ASCH. One morning, knowing that he was an avid bird watcher, I mentioned some particularly attractive birds I had seen two days before at the bottom of the hill on which we stood. Without asking when I had seen them, he took off at a dead sprint down the hill, I scampered after him, shouting, “Dr. Pattie, Dr. Pattie, it was yesterday!” To no avail. When finally we both stood breathless at the bottom, he turned to me and demanded, “Where are they?” Alas, the birds had flown the bush.

Frank Pattie lived 52 of his 98 years in Lexington, Kentucky, where he taught at the University of Kentucky from 1947 to 1971. He had taught at Rice University before that. Born in Winchester, Tennessee in 1901 he worked briefly as a court reporter following high school. He was there for one of the most famous court cases, the “Scopes Monkey Trial,” watching Clarence Darrow and William Jennings Bryan clash on the teaching of evolution in the public schools.
A graduate of Vanderbilt University, he later earned a Masters Degree at Harvard and his Ph.D. at Princeton. His name remains a part of the latter university. Frank Pattie’s overriding life’s work was the study of Fran Alton Mesmer. Toward that end he collected a vast library of works by Mesmer and his contemporaries. The Frank Acklen Pattie Mesmer Collection is comprised of over 250 books from the 18th century and 170 books from the 19th.

During his lifetime, Frank Pattie was the quintessential scholar, being equally at home in French, German, Spanish, Latin, and of course his native English. Frank Pattie’s life study of Mesmer put to good use his linguistic scholarship and culminated in his 1994 book, *Mesmer and Animal Magnetism*, a book that competed that year for the Louis Gottshalk Prize for an outstanding historical study on the 18th century and the Pulitzer Prize for biography.

In his later years he continued his avocations of bird watching, gardening (both flowers and vegetables) and photography. Many of his postcards were reproductions of photos he had taken while traveling in two of his favorite foreign haunts, Mexico and Hungary. Both postcards and letters were often stamped with stamps he had collected in the years preceding World War II.

Despite all of his many interests, I know that Frank A. Pattie would want best to be remembered for his scholarly contributions to the world of knowledge. Yet, his many other facets are important, too.

How then shall I capture Frank A. Pattie in a single word? Simply, Frank Pattie was a humorist, a photographer, a stamp collector, a traveler, a bird watcher, a gardener, a linguist, an academic, a scholar... There, I knew I couldn’t do it. But suffice it to say, he will be missed.